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ORIGINES SACRÆ,
OR A
Rational Account of the Grounds
OF
Christian Faith,
AS TO THE
TRUTH
AND
Divine Authority
OF THE
SCRIPTURES,
And the matters therein contained.

By **EDWARD STILLINGFLEET** D. D.
Dean of St. Paul's, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

The Fifth Edition Corrected and Amended.

2 Pet. 1. 16. *For we have not followed cunningly devised Fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty.*
Neque religio ulla sine sapientiâ suscipienda est, nec ulla sine religione probanda sapientia. Lactant. de fals. relig. cap. 1.

L O N D O N,

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To his most Honoured
Friend and Patron

Sr. ROGER BURGOIN,
Knight and Baronet.

SIR,



IT was the early *felicity* of
Moses, when exposed in an
Ark of *Nilotick papyre*, to be
adopted into the *favour* of
so great a personage as the
Daughter of Pharaoh: Such
another *Ark* is this vindication of the wri-
tings of that *Divine* and *excellent Person* ex-
posed to the world in; and the greatest am-
bition of the Author of it, is, to have it re-
ceived into your *Patronage* and *Protection*.
But although the contexture and frame of
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this Treatise be far below the excellency and worth of the subject (as you know the Ark in which Moses was put, was of bulrushes daubed with slime and pitch) yet when You please to cast your eye on the matter contained in it, you will not think it beneath your Favour, and unworthy your Protection. For if Truth be the greatest Present which God could bestow, or man receive (according to that of Plutarch, *ὡς εἰδέναι ἀνθρώπῳ λαβεῖν μέγιστον, ἐχαιρίζεσθαι διὰ σέμνότητος ἀληθείας*) then certainly those Truths deserve our most ready acceptance, which are in themselves of greatest importance, and have the greatest evidence that they come from God. And although I have had the happiness of so near relation to You, and acquaintance with You, as to know how little You need such discourses which tend to settle the Foundations of Religion, which you have raised so happy a Superstructure upon; yet withal I consider what particular Kindness the souls of all good men bear to such Designs, whose end is to assert and vindicate the Truth and Excellency of Religion. For those who are enriched themselves with the inestimable Treasure of true Goodness and Piety

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Piety are far from that envious temper, to think nothing valuable but what they are the sole Possessors of; but such are the most satisfied themselves, when they see others not only admire but enjoy what they have the highest estimation of. Were all who make a shew of Religion in the World really such as they pretend to be, discourses of this nature would be no more seasonable than the commendations of a great *Beauty* to one who is already a passionate admirer of it; but on the contrary we see how common it is for men first to throw *dirt* in the face of Religion, and then perswade themselves it is its natural *Complexion*; they represent it to themselves in a *shape* least pleasing to them, and then bring that as a *Plea* why they give it no better entertainment.

It may justly seem strange, that true Religion, which contains nothing in it but what is truly *Noble* and *Generous*, most *rational* and *pleasing* to the *spirits* of all good men, should yet suffer so much in its esteem in the world, through those strange and uncouth *vizards* it is represented under: Some accounting the life and practice of it, as it speaks *subduing*

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our *wills* to the *will* of *God* (which is the substance of all Religion) a thing too low and mean for their rank and condition in the World, while others pretend a quarrel against the principles of it as unsatisfactory to *Humane reason*. Thus Religion suffers with the *Author* of it between two *Thieves*, and it is hard to define which is most injurious to it, that which questions the *Principles*, or that which despiseth the *Practice* of it. And nothing certainly will more incline men to believe that we live in an *Age* of *Prodigies*, than that there should be any such in the Christian World who should account it a piece of *Gentility* to despise Religion, and a piece of *Reason* to be *Atheists*. For if there be any such thing in the World as a true height and magnanimity of spirit, if there be any solid reason and depth of judgement, they are not only consistent with, but only attainable by a true generous spirit of Religion. But if we look at that which the loose and prophane World is apt to account the greatest gallantry, we shall find it made up of such pitiful Ingredients, which any skilful and rational mind will be ashamed to plead for, much less to
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mention them in competition with true goodness and unfeigned piety. For how easie is it to observe such who would be accounted the most high and gallant spirits, to quarry on such mean preys which only tend to satisfy their brutish appetites, or flesh revenge with the blood of such who have stood in the way of that aery title, *Honour*! Or else they are so little apprehensive of the inward worth and excellency of humane nature, that they seem to envy the gallantry of Peacocks, and strive to outvie them in the gayety of their Plumes; such who are, as Seneca saith, *ad similitudinem parietum suorum extrinsecus culti*, who imitate the walls of their houses in the fairness of the outsides, but matter not what rubbish there lies within. The utmost of their ambition is to attain *enervatam felicitatem quâ permadescunt animi*, such a felicity as enervates the soul by too long sleeping, it being the nature of all terrestrial pleasures that they do *ἐκτίναν ἔ' ἀνυσεβνεν τὸ φρονεῖν*, by degrees consume reason by effeminating and softning the Intellectuals. Must we appeal then to the judgement of Sardanapalus concerning the nature of Felicity, or enquire of Apicius what

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temperance is? or desire that Sybarite to define Magnanimity, who fainted to see a man at hard labour?

Or doth now the conquest of passions, forgiving injuries, doing good, self-denial, humility, patience under crosses, which are the real expressions of piety, I speak nothing more noble and generous than a luxurious, malicious, proud, and impatient spirit? Is there nothing more becoming and agreeable to the soul of man, in exemplary Piety, and a Holy well ordered Conversation, than in the lightness and vanity (not to say rudeness and debaucheries) of those whom the world accounts the greatest gallants? Is there nothing more graceful and pleasing in the sweetness, candour, and ingenuity of a truly Christian temper and disposition, than in the revengeful, implacable spirit of such whose Honour lives and is fed by the Blood of their enemies? Is it not more truly honourable and glorious to serve that God who commands the World, than to be a slave to those passions and lusts which put men upon continual hard service, and torment them for it when they have done it? Were there nothing else to commend Religion to the minds of men, besides that

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that tranquillity and calmness of spirit, that serene and peaceable temper which follows a good conscience where ever it dwells, it were enough to make men welcome that guest which brings such good entertainment with it. Whereas the amazements, horrors, and anxieties of mind, which at one time or other haunt such who prostitute their Consciences to a violation of the Laws of God, and the rules of rectified reason, may be enough to perswade any rational person, that impiety is the greatest folly, and irreligion madness. It cannot be then but matter of great pity to consider that any persons whose birth and education hath raised them above the common people of the World, should be so far their own enemies, as to observe the Fashion more than the rules of Religion, and to study complements more than themselves, and read Romances more than the Sacred Scriptures, which alone are able to make them wise to salvation.

But Sir, I need not mention these things to You, unless it be to let You see the excellency of your choice, in preferring true *Vertue* and *Piety* above the Ceremony and Grandeur.

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deur of the World. Go on, Sir, to value and measure true *Religion* not by the uncertain measures of the *World*, but by the infallible dictates of *God* himself in his sacred *Oracles*. Were it not for these, what certain foundation could there be for our *Faith* to stand on? and who durst venture his soul, as to its future condition, upon any authority less than the *infallible Veracity* of *God* himself? What certain directions for practice should we have, what rule to judge of opinions by, had not *God* out of his *infinite goodness* provided and preserved this authentick *instrument* of his *Will* to the *World*? What a strange *Religion* would *Christianity* seem, should we frame the Model of it from any other thing than the *Word* of *God*? Without all controverſie the *disesteem* of the *Scriptures* upon any pretence whatsoever, is the *decay* of *Religion*, and through many windings and turnings leads men at last into the very depth of *Atheism*. Whereas the frequent and serious conversing with the mind of *God* in his *Word*, is incomparably useful, not only for keeping up in us a true No-

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tion of Religion (which is easily mistaken, when men look upon the *face* of it in any other glass than that of the Scriptures) but likewise for maintaining a powerful sense of Religion in the souls of men, and a due valuation of it, whatever its esteem or entertainment be in the world. For though the true genuine spirit of *Christianity* (which is known by the *purity* and *peaceableness* of it) should grow never so much out of credit with the World; yet none who heartily believe the *Scriptures* to be the *Word of God*, and that the matters revealed therein are infallibly *true*, will ever have the less estimation of it. It must be confessed that the *credit* of Religion hath much suffered in the *Age* we live in through the vain pretences of many to it, who have only acted a *part* in it for the sake of some private interests of their own. And it is the usual *Logick* of *Atheists*, *crimine ab uno. Disce omnes*; if there be any *hypocrites*, all who make shew of Religion, are such, on which account the *Hypocrisie* of one *Age* makes way for the *Atheism* of the next. But how unreasonable and unjust that imputation

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tation is, there needs not much to discover, unless it be an argument there are no true men in the World, because there are so many *Apes* which imitate them; or that there are no *Jewels*, because there are so many *Counterfeits*. And blessed be God, our *Age* is not barren of Instances of real goodness and unaffected piety; there being some such generous spirits as dare love Religion without the dowry of Interest, and manifest their affection to it in the plain dress of the Scriptures, without the paint and set-offs which are added to it by the several contending parties of the Christian World. Were there more such noble spirits of Religion in our Age, Atheism would want one of the greatest Pleas which it now makes against the Truth of Religion; for nothing enlarges more the Gulf of Atheism, than that *μεγάλη ὁδός*, that wide passage which lies between the Faith and Lives of men pretending to be Christians. I must needs say there is nothing seems more strange and unaccountable to me, than that the Practice of the unquestionable duties of Christianity should be put out of Countenance,

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or slighted by any who own, profess, and contend for the Principles of it. Can the profession of that be honourable, whose practice is not? If the principles be true, why are they not practised? If they be not true, why are they professed?

You see, Sir, to what an unexpected length my desire to vindicate the Honour as well as Truth of Religion, hath drawn out this present address. But I may sooner hope for your pardon in it, than if I had spent so much paper after the usual manner of Dedications, in representing You to Your self or the World. Sir, I know You have too much of that I have been commending, to delight in Your own deserved praises, much less in flatteries, which so benign a subject might easily make ones Pen run over in. And therein I might not much have digressed from my design, since I know few more exemplary for that rare mixture of true piety, and the highest civility together, in whom that inestimable jewel of Religion is placed in a most sweet, affable, and obliging temper. But although none will be more ready on any occasion with all gratitude to acknowledge

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the great obligations *You* have laid upon me; yet I am so far sensible of the common vanity of *Epistles Dedicatory*; that I cannot so heartily comply with them in any thing, as in my hearty prayer to Almighty God for your good and *welfare*, and in subscribing myself,

Sir,

Your most humble and

affectionate servant,

June 5. 1662.

Ed. Stillingfleet.



THE
PREFACE
TO THE
READER.

I*T is neither to satisfy the importunity of friends, nor to prevent false copies (which and such like excuses I know are expected in usual Prefaces) that I have adventured abroad this following Treatise: but it is out of a just resentment of the affronts and indignities which have been cast on Religion; by such, who account it a matter of judgement to disbelieve the Scriptures, and a piece of wit to dispute themselves out of the possibility of being happy in another world: When yet the more acute and subtle their arguments are, the greater their strength is against themselves, it being impossible there should be so much wit and subtilty in the souls of men, were they not of a more excellent nature than they imagine them to be. And how contradictory is it for such persons to be ambitious of being cryed up for wit and reason, whose*

(b 2) *design*

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design is to degrade the rational soul so far below her self, as to make her become like the beasts that perish! If now the weight and consequence of the subject, and the too great seasonableness of it (if the common fame of the large spread of Atheism among us be true) be not sufficient Apology for the publishing this Book, I am resolved rather to undergo thy censure, than be beholding to any other. The intendment therefore of this Preface is only to give a brief account of the scope, design, and method of the following Books, although the view of the Contents of the Chapters might sufficiently acquaint thee with it. How far I have been either from transcribing, or a design to excuss out of the hands of their admirers, the several writings on the behalf of Religion in general, or Christianity in particular (especially Morny, Grotius, Amyraldus, &c.) may easily appear by comparing what is contained in their Books and this together. Had I not thought something might be said, if not more fully and rationally, yet more suitably to the present temper of this Age, than what is already written by them, thou hadst not been troubled with this Preface, much less with the whole Book. But as the Tempers and Genius's of Ages and Times alter, so do the arms and weapons which Atheists employ against Religion; the most popular pretences of the Atheists of our Age, have been the irreconcilableness of the account of Times in Scripture, with that of the learned and ancient Heathen Nations; the inconsistency of the belief of the Scriptures with the principles of reason: and the account which may be given of the Origine of things from principles of Philosophy without the Scriptures: These three therefore I have particularly set my self against, and directed against each of them a several Book. In the first I have manifested

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manifested that there is no ground of credibility in the account of ancient times given by any Heathen Nations different from the Scriptures, which I have with so much care and diligence enquired into, that from thence we may hope to hear no more of men before Adam to salve the Authority of the Scriptures by, which yet was intended only as a design to undermine them; but I have not thought the frivolous pretences of the Author of that Hypothesis worth particular mentioning, supposing it sufficient to give a clear account of things without particular citation of Authors, where it was not of great concernment for understanding the thing it self. In the second Book I have undertaken to give a rational account of the grounds, why we are to believe those several persons, who in several ages were employed to reveal the mind of God to the world, and with greater particularity than hath yet been used, I have insisted on the persons of Moses, and the Prophets, our Saviour and his Apostles, and in every of them manifested the rational evidences on which they were to be believed, not only by the men of their own Age, but by those of succeeding Generations. In the third Book I have insisted on the matters themselves which are either supposed by, or revealed in the Scriptures; and have therein not only manifested the certainty of the foundations of all Religion which lye in the Being of God and Immortality of the soul, but the undoubted truth of those particular accounts concerning the Origine of the Universe, of Evil, and of Nations, which were most liable to the Atheists exceptions, and have therein considered all the pretences of Philosophy ancient or modern, which have seemed to contradict any of them; to which (mantissæ loco) I have added the evidence of Scripture-History in the
remain-

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remainders of it in Heathen Mythology, and concluded all with a discourse of the excellency of the Scriptures. Thus having given a brief view of the design and method of the whole, I submit it to every free and unprejudiced judgement. All the favour then I shall request of thee, is to read seriously, and judge impartially; and then I doubt not but thou wilt see as much reason for Religion as I do.

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ORIGINES.

ORIGINES SACRÆ:

The Truth of SCRIPTURE-HISTORY Asserted.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

The obscurity and defect of Ancient History.

The knowledge of truth proved to be the most natural perfection of the rational soul ; yet error often mistaken for truth ; the accounts of it. Want of diligence in its search, the mixture of truth and falsehood : Thence comes either rejecting truth for the errors sake, or embracing the error for the truths sake ; the first instanced in Heathen Philosophers, the second in vulgar Heathen. Of Philosophical Atheism, and the grounds of it. The History of Antiquity very obscure. The question stated where the true History of ancient times is to be found, in Heathen Histories, or only in Scripture ? The want of credibility in Heathen Histories asserted and proved by the general defect for want of timely records among Heathen Nations ; the reason of it shewed from the first Plantations of the World. The manner of them discovered. The Original of Civil Government. Of Hieroglyphicks. The use of letters among the Greeks no elder than Cadmus, his time enquired into, no elder than Joshua, the learning brought into Greece by him.



Enquiries after truth have that peculiar commendation above all other designs, that they come on purpose to gratifie the most noble faculty of our souls, and do most immediately tend to re-advance the highest perfection of our rational beings. For all our most laudable endeavours after knowledge now, are only

the gathering up some scattered fragments of what was once an entire Fabrick, and the recovery of some precious Jewels which were lost out of sight, and sunk in the shipwreck of humane nature. That saying of Plato, that all knowledge is remembrance, and all ignorance, forgetfulness, is a certain and undoubted truth, if by forgetfulness be meant the loss, and by remembrance the recovery of those notions and conceptions of things which the mind of man once had in its pure and primitive state, wherein the understanding was the truest Microcosm, in which all the beings of the inferiour world were faithfully represented according to their true, native, and genuine perfections. God created the soul of man not only capable of finding out the truth of things, but furnished him with a sufficient *metheor* or touchstone to discover truth from falshood, by a light set up in his understanding, which if he had attended to, he might have secured himself from all impostures and deceits. As all other beings were created in the full possession of the agreeable perfections of their several natures, so was man too, else God would have never closed the work of Creation with those words, *And God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good*: that is, endued with all those perfections which were suitable to their several beings. Which man had been most defective in, if his understanding had not been endowed with a large stock of intellectual knowledge, which is the most natural and genuine perfection belonging to his rational being. For reason being the most raised faculty of humane nature, if that had been defective in its discoveries of truth, which is its proper object, it would have argued the greatest main and imperfection in the being it self. For if it belongs to the perfection of the sensitive faculties to discern what is pleasant from what is hurtful, it must needs be the perfection of the rational to find out the difference of truth from falshood. Not as though the soul could then have had any more than now, an actual notion of all the beings in the world co-existing at the same time, but that it would have been free from all deceits in its conceptions of things, which were not caused through inadvertency.

Gen. I. 31.

Sect. 2.

Which will appear from the several aspects mans knowledge

ledge hath, which are either *upwards* towards his *Maker*, or *abroad* on his *fellow-creatures*. If we consider that *contemplation* of the *soul* which fixes it self on that *Infinite being* which was the *cause* of it, and is properly *Seveia*; it will be found necessary for the *soul* to be created in a clear and distinct knowledge of him, because of mans *immediate obligation to obedience* unto him. Which must necessarily suppose the *knowledge* of him whose *will* must be his *rule*; for if *man* were not fully convinced in the first moment after his *creation* of the *being* of him, whom he was to *obey*, his *first work* and *duty* would not have been *actual obedience*, but a *search* whether there was any *supream, infinite, and eternal being* or no; and whereon his *duty* to him was *founded*, and what might be *sufficient declaration* of his *Will* and *Laws*, according to which he must *regulate* his *obedience*. The *taking off* all which *doubts* and *scruples* from the *soul* of *man*, must suppose him fully satisfied upon the *first free use* of *reason*, that there was an *Infinite Power* and *Being* which produced him, and on that account had a *right* to *command* him in whatsoever he pleased, and that those *commands* of his were *declared* to him in so *certain* a way, that he could not be *deceived* in the *judging* of them. The *clear knowledge* of *God* will further appear most *necessary to man* in his *first creation*, if we consider that *God* created him for this *end* and *purpose*, to enjoy *converse*, and an *humble familiarity* with himself; he had then ἐμμετρον πρὸς τὸ θεῶν κοινωνίαν in the language of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Converse with God* was as *natural to him as his being* was. For *man*, as he came first out of *Gods hands*, was the *reflection* of *God* himself on a *dark Cloud*, the *Iris* of the *Deity*, the *similitude* was the *same*, but the *substance* different: Thence he is said to be created *after the Image of God*. His *knowledge* then had been more *intellectual* than *discursive*; not so much *employing* his *faculties* in the *operose deductions* of *reason* (the *pleasant toyl* of the *rational faculties* since the *Fall*) but had *immediately employed* them about the *sublimest objects*, not about *quiddities* and *formalities*, but about him who was the *fountain* of his *being*, and the *centre* of his *happiness*. There was not then so vast a *difference* betwixt the *Angelical* and

Protrept. p. 63.

Gen. I. 26.

humane life: The *Angels* and *men* both fed on the same dainties; all the difference was, they were in the ὑπερῶν, the upper room in heaven, and man in the Summer Parlour in Paradise.

Seft. 3.

If we take a view of mans knowledge as it respects his fellow-creatures, we shall find these were so fully known to him on his first creation, that he needed not to go to School to the wide world to gather up his conceptions of them. For the right exercise of that *Dominion* which he was instated in over the inferior world, doth imply a particular knowledge of the nature, being, and properties of those things which he was to make use of, without which he could not have improved them for their peculiar ends. And from this knowledge did proceed the giving the creatures those proper and peculiar names which were expressive of their several natures. For as Plato tells us, ἡ πᾶντα δημιουργὸν ὀνομάτων ἐστὶ, ἀλλὰ μόνον ἐκείνον ἃ ἀποχέρονται εἰς τὸ τῇ φύσει ὄνομα ὃν ἐκδῶ: The imposition of names on things belongs not to every one, but only to him that hath a full prospect into their several natures. For it is most agreeable to reason, that names should carry in them a suitableness to the things they express; for words being for no other end but to express our conceptions of things, and our conceptions being but εἰκόνες ἢ ὁμοιώματα πραγμάτων, as the same Philosopher speaks, the resemblances and representations of the things, it must needs follow, that where there was a true knowledge, the conceptions must agree with the things; and words being to express our conceptions, none are so fit to do it, as those which are expressive of the several natures of the things they are used to represent. For otherwise all the use of words is to be a meer vocabulary to the understanding, and an Index to memory, and of no further use in the pursuit of knowledge, than to let us know what words men are agreed to call things by. But something further seems to be intended in their first imposition, whence the Jews call it הכרלת המנים as Mercer tells us, a separation and distinction of the several kinds of things: and Kircher thus paraphrased the words of Moses. And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof, i. e. saith he, Fuerunt illis vera & germana nomina & rerum naturis

In Cratyl.

Gen. 2. 19.

Oedip.
Egypt. Tom.
2. class. 2.
cap. 1.

pro.

proprie accommodata. But however this be, we have this further *evidence* of that *height of knowledge* which must be supposed in the *first man*, that as he was the *first* in his kind, so he was to be the *standard* and *measure* of all that followed, and therefore could not want any thing of the *due perfections of humane nature.* And as the *shekel* of the *Sanctuary* was, if not *double* to others, (as men ordinarily mistake) yet of a *full and exact weight*, because it was to be the *standard* for all other *weights* (which was the cause of its being kept in the *Temple* :) So if the *first man* had not *double* the *proportion* and *measure* of *knowledge* which his *posterity* hath, if it was not *running over* in regard of *abundance*, yet it must be *pressed down* and *shaken together* in regard of *weight* : else he would be a very unfit *standard* for us to judge by, concerning the *due* and *suitable perfections* of *humane nature.*

But we need not have run so far back as the *first man* to evince the *knowledge of truth* to be the most natural *perfection* of the *soul* of man ; for even among the present *ruines* of humane nature we may find some such *noble* and *generous* spirits, that discern so much *beauty* in the *face* of truth, that to such as should enquire what they find so *attractive* in it, their Answer would be the same with *Aristotles* in a like case, it was *τὸ πλεῖστον ἐρωτήματα*, the *Question* of those who never saw it. For so *pleasing* is the *enquiry*, and so *satisfactory* the *finding* of *truth* after the *search*, that the *relish* of it doth far exceed the greatest *Epicurism* of *Apicius*, or the most costly entertainments of *Cleopatra* ; there being no *Gust* so exquisite as that of the *mind*, nor any *Jewels* to be compared with *Truth.* Nor do any persons certainly better deserve the name of *men*, than such who allow their *reason* a *full employment*, and think not the *erectness* of mans *stature* a sufficient *distinction* of him from *Brutes.* Of which those may be accounted only a higher *species* who can patiently suffer the *imprisonment* of their *Intellectuals* in a *Dungeon* of *Ignorance*, and know themselves to be *men*, only by those *Characters* by which *Alexander* knew himself not to be a *God*, by their proneness to *intemperance* and *sleep.* So strange a *Metempsychosis* may there be without any change of bodies, and *En-*

phorbus his soul might become a *Brute*, without ever removing its lodging into the body of an *Ass*. So much will the soul degenerate from it self, if not improved, and in a kind of *stupidity* scarce appear to be what it is, because it is not improved to what it may be.

Sett. 5.
Object.

But if this knowledge of truth be so great, so natural, so valuable a perfection of humane nature, whence comes so much of the world to be over-run with Ignorance and Barbarism, whence come so many pretenders to knowledge, to court a cloud instead of *Juno*, to pretend a Love to truth, and yet to fall down and worship error? If there were so great a sympathy between the soul and truth, there would be an impatient desire after it, and a most ready embracing and closing with it. We see the Magnet doth not draw the Iron with greater force than it seems to run with impatience into its closest embraces. If there had been formerly so intimate an acquaintance between the soul and truth, as *Socrates* fancied of friends in the other world, there would be an harmonious closure upon the first appearance, and no divorce to be after made between them?

Ans.

True, but then we must consider there is an intermediate state between the former acquaintance, and the renewal of it, wherein all those remaining characters of mutual knowledge are sunk so deep, and lie so hid, that there needs a new fire to be kindled to bring forth those latent figures, and make them again appear legible. And when once those tokens are produced of the former friendship, there are not more impatient longings, nor more close embraces between the touched needle and the Magnet, than there are between the understanding and discovered truth. But then withal, we are to consider that they are but few whose souls are awakened out of that *Lethargy* they are fallen into in this degenerate condition, the most are so pleased with their sleep, that they are loth to disturb their rest, and set a higher price upon a lazy Ignorance, than upon a restless knowledge. And even of those whose souls are as it were between sleeping and waking, what by reason of the remaining confusion of the species in their brains, what by the present dimness of their sight, and the hovering uncertain light they are to judge by, there are few that can put a difference between a meer phantasm and a

real

real truth. Of which these rational accounts may be given, viz. *Why so few pretenders to knowledge do light on truth.*

First, *Want of an impartial diligence in the search of it.* Truth now must be sought, and that with care and diligence, before we find it; *Jewels* do not use to lie upon the surface of the earth; *Highways* are seldom paved with gold; what is most worth our *Finding*, calls for the greatest search. If one that walks the streets should find some inestimable Jewel, or one that travels the road meet with a bag of gold, it would be but a silly design of any to walk the street, or travel the road in hopes to meet with such a purchase to make them rich. If some have happily light on some valuable truths when they minded nothing less than them, must this render a diligence useless in inquiries after such? No: Truth, though she be so fair and pleasing as to draw our affections, is yet so modest as to admit of being courted, and it may be deny the first suit, to heighten our importunity. And certainly nothing hath oftner forbid the bane between the understanding the Truth inquired after, than partiality and pre-occupation of Judgement: which makes men enquire more diligently after the dowry than the beauty of Truth, its correspondency to their Interests, than its evidence to their understandings. An useful error hath often kept the Keys of the mind for free admission, when important truths but contrary to their pre-conceptions or interests have been forbidden entrance. Prejudice is the wrong bias of the soul, that effectually keeps it from coming near the mark of truth, nay, sets it at the greatest distance from it. There are few in the world that look after truth with their own eyes, most make use of spectacles of others making, which makes them so seldom behold the proper lineaments in the face of Truth; which the several tinctures from education, authority, custom, and pre-disposition do exceedingly hinder men from discerning of.

Seet. 6.

Another reason why there are so few who find truth, when so many pretend to seek it, is that near resemblance which Error often bears to Truth. It hath been well observed that Error seldom walks abroad the world in her own rayments, she always borrows something of truth, to make her more

Seet. 7.

accept.

acceptable to the world. It hath been always the *subtily* of *grand deceivers* to graft their greatest errors on some material truths, to make them pass more undiscernable to all such who look more at the root on which they stand, than on the fruits which they bring forth. It will hereafter appear how most of the grossest of the *Heathen errors* have, as *Plutarch* saith of the *Aegyptian Fables*, ἀμυδῆς τινος ὁμοιωσις & ἀκρίβειας, some faint and obscure resemblances of truth; nay more than so, as most pernicious weeds are bred in the fattest soyls; their most destructive principles have been founded on some necessary and important truths. Thus *Idolatri* doth suppose the belief of the existence of a *Deity*; and *superstition* on the *Immortality* of the souls of men. The *Devil* could never have built his *Chapels*, but on the same ground whereon *Gods Temples* stood; which makes me far less wonder than many do, at the meeting with many expressions concerning these two grand truths in the writings of ancient *Heathens*, knowing how willing the *Devil* might be to have such principles still owned in the world, which by his depraving of them might be the nourishers of *Idolatri* and *Superstition*. For the general knowledge of a *Divine nature*, supposing men *Ignorant* of the true *God*, did only lay a foundation to erect his *Idolatrous Temples* upon; and the belief of the souls surviving the body after death, without knowledge of the true way of attaining happiness, did make men more eager of embracing those *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, which came with a pretence of shewing the way to a blessed immortality.

Seet. 8.

Which may be a most probable reason why *Philosophy* and *Idolatri* did increase so much together as they did; for though right reason fully improved would have overthrown all those cursed and *Idolatrous practices* among the *Heathens*, yet reason only discerning some general notions without their particular application and improvement, did only dispose the most ordinary sort of people to a more ready entertainment of the most gross *Idolatri*. For hereby they discerned the necessity of some kind of worship, but could not find out the right way of it, and therefore they greedily followed that which was commended to them, by such who did withal

agree

agree with them in the *common sentiments* of humane nature: Nay, and those *persons* themselves who were the great maintainers of these *sublimar Notions* concerning God and the *soul of man*, were either the great *instruments* of advancing that horrid *superstition* among them, as *Orpheus* and *Apollonius*, or very forward *Compliers* with it, as many of the *Philosophers* were. Although withal it cannot be denied to have been a wonderful *discovery* of *Divine providence*, by these *general notions* to keep waking the inward *senses* of *mens souls*, that thereby it might appear when *Divine Revelation* should be manifested to them, that it brought nothing contrary to the *common principles* of humane nature, but did only *rectifie* the *depravations* of it, and clearly shew men that way, which they had long been ignorantly seeking after. Which was the excellent advantage the *Apostle* made of the *Inscription* on the *Altar at Athens* to the *unknown God*; Whom, saith he, ye ignorantly serve, him I declare unto you. And which was the happy use the *Primitive learned Christians* made of all those *passages* concerning the *divine nature*, and the *Immortality* of the *souls of men*, which they found in the *Heathen Writers*, thereby to evidence to the world that the main *postulata* or *suppositions* of *Christian Religion* were granted by their own most admired men: and that *Christianity* did not *rase* out, but only *build* upon those *common foundations*, which were entertained by all who had any name for *reason*. A& 17. 23.

Though this, I say, were the happy effect of this building errors on common truths to all that had the advantage of *Divine Revelation* to discern the one from the other; yet as to others who were destitute of it, they were lyable to this twofold great inconvenience by it. First, for the sake of the apparent rottenness of the *Superstructures* to question the soundness of the *foundations* on which they stood. And this I doubt not was the case of many *considerative heathens*, who observing that monstrous and unreasonable way of worship obtaining among the *heathen*, and not being able by the strength of their own reason, through the want of *divine revelation* to deduce any certain *instituted worship*, they were shrewdly tempted to renounce those principles, when they could not Sect. 9.

but abhor the *conclusions* drawn from them ; for there is nothing more *usual* than for men who exceedingly detest some absurd *consequence* they see may be drawn from a *principle* supposed, to reject the *principle* itself for the sake of that *consequence* , which it may be doth not necessarily follow from it , but through the *shortness* of their own *reason* doth appear to them to do so. Thus when the *Intelligent* heathen did apparently see that from the *principles* of the *Being* of God , and the *Immortality* of *souls* , did flow all those *unnatural* and *inhumane* *Sacrifices* , all those *absurd* and *ridiculous* *Rites* , all those *execrable* and *prophane* *mysteries* , out of a loathing the *Immoralities* and *impieties* which attended these , they were brought to *question* the very *truth* and *certainty* of those *principles* which were capable of being thus abused.

Sett. 10.

And therefore I am very prone to suspect the *Apology* usually made for *Protagoras* , *Diagoras* , and such others of them who were accounted *Atheists* , to be more favourable than true, viz. that they only rejected those heathen *Deities* , and not the belief of the *Divine* nature. I should think this account of their reputed *Atheism* rational, were it any way evident that they did build their belief of a *Divine* nature , upon any other grounds than such as were common to them with those whose *worship* they so much derided. And therefore when the Heathens accused the *Christians* of *Atheism* , I have full and clear evidence that no more could be meant thereby than the rejection of their way of *worship* , because I have sufficient *Affurance* from them that they did believe in a *Divine* Nature , and an instituted Religion most suitable to the most common received notions of God , which they owned in opposition to all heathen *worship*. Which I find not in the least pretended to by any of the forementioned persons , nor any thing of any different way of Religion asserted , but only a destruction of that in use among them.

Sett. 11.

And although the case of *Anaxagoras* *Clazomenius* , and the rest of the *Ionick* *Philosophers* might seem very different from *Diagoras* , *Theodorus* , and those beforementioned , because although they denied the *Gods* in vulgar repute to be such as they were thought to be (as *Anaxagoras* called the

Sum.

Συνμύδος διδρυγος, a meer globe of fire, for which he was condemned at Athens to banishment, and fined five talents; yet the learned *Vossius* puts in this plea in his behalf, that he was one that asserted the creation of the world to flow from an eternal mind) although therefore, I say, the case of the Ionick Philosophers may seem far different from the others, because of their asserting the production of the World (which from *Thales Milesius* was conveyed by *Anaximander* and *Anaximenes* to *Anaxagoras*) yet to one that thoroughly considers what they understood by their eternal mind, they may be sooner cleared from the imputation of Atheism, than irreligion. Which two certainly ought in this case to be distinguished; for it is very possible for men meeting with such insuperable difficulties, about the casual concurrence of Atoms for the production of the World, or the eternal existence of matter, to assert some eternal mind, as the first cause of these things, which yet they may imbrace only as an hypothesis in Philosophy to solve the phanomena of nature with, but yet not to make this eternal mind the object of adoration. And so their asserting a Deity, was only on the same account as the Tragedians used to bring in their *Θεοὶ ἀπὸ μυχῶν*, when their Fables were brought to such an issue, and perplexed with so many difficulties that they saw no way to clear them again, but to make some God come down upon the Stage to solve the difficulties they were engaged in; or as *Seneca* saith of many great Families when they had run up their Genealogies so high that they could go no further, they then fetched their pedigree from the Gods: So when these Philosophers saw such incongruities in asserting an infinite and eternal series of matter, they might by this be brought to acknowledge some active principle which produced the world, though they were far enough from giving any Religious worship to that eternal mind.

De Idololatriæ.
c. 1.

Thus even *Epicurus* and his followers would not stick to assert the being of a God; so they might but circumscribe him within the heavens, and let him have nothing to do with things that were done on earth. And how uncertain the most dogmatical of them all were, as to their opinions concerning the being and nature of their gods, doth fully appear from

Seet 12.

De nat. Deor.
l. 1. c. 63.

the large discourses of Tully upon that subject: where is fully manifested their variety of opinions, and mutual Repugnancies, their self-contradictions and inconstancy in their own assertions; which hath made me somewhat inclinable to think that the reason why many of them did to the world own a Deity, was, that they might not be Martyrs for Atheism: Which Tully likewise seems to acknowledge, when speaking of the punishment of Protagoras, for that speech of his, *De diis neque ut sint, neque ut non sint, habeo dicere. Ex quo equidem existimo tardiores ad hanc sententiam profitendam multos esse factos, quippe cum poenam ne dubitatio quidem effugere potuisset.* So that for all the verbal asserting of a Deity among them, we have no certain evidence of their firm belief of it, and much less of any worship and service they owed unto it. And though, it may be, they could not totally excuse the notions of a Deity out of their minds, partly through that natural sense which is engraven on the souls of men, partly, as being unable to solve the difficulties of nature, without a Deity; yet the observing the notorious vanities of Heathen worship, might make them look upon it as a meer Philosophical speculation, and not any thing that had an influence upon the government of mens lives: For as in nature the observing the great mixture of falsehood and truth made the Academicks deny any certain *κρισις*, or rule of judging truth; and the Scepticks take away all certain assent; so the same consequence was unavoidable here, upon the same principle; and that made even Plato himself so ambiguous and uncertain in his discourses of a Deity, sometimes making him an eternal mind, sometimes asserting the whole World, Sun, Moon, Stars, Earth, Souls, and all to be Gods, and even those that were worshipped among the heathens, as Tully tells us out of his *Timaeus* and *de Legibus*; which as Velleins the Epicurean there speaks, *Et per se sunt falsa & sibi invicem repugnantia.* This is the first inconvenience following the mixture of truth and falsehood, for the sake of the falsehood to question the truth it self it was joyned with.

Seet. 13.

The other is as great which follows, when truth and falsehood are mixed, for the sake of the truth to embrace the falsehood. Which is a mistake as common as the other, because

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men are apt to think that things so vastly different as *truth* and *falsehood*, could never blend, or be incorporate together; therefore when they are certain they have some *truth*, they conclude no *falsehood* to be joyned with it. And this I suppose to have been the case of the more credulous and vulgar *Heathen*, as the other was of the *Philosophers*; for they finding mankind to agree in this, not only that there is a *God*, but that he must be worship'd, did without scruple make use of the way of worship among them, as knowing there must be some, and they were ignorant of any else. And from hence they grew to be as confident believers of all those fables and traditions on which their Idolatry was founded, as of those first principles and notions from which the necessity of divine worship did arise. And being thus habituated to the belief of these things, when truth it self was divulged among them, they suspected it to be only a corruption of some of their Fables. This Celsus the Epicurean on all occasions in his books against the Christians did fly to. Thus he saith the building of the Tower of Babel, and the confusion of Tongues, was taken from the fable of the Aloadæ in Homers *Odysses*, the story of the Flood from *Deucalion*, *Paradise* from *Alcinous* his gardens, the burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* from the story of *Phaeton*. Which *Origen* well refutes from the far greater antiquity of those relations among the *Jews*, than any among the *Greeks*: and therefore the corruption of the tradition was in them, and not the *Jews*. Which must be our only way for finding out which was the Original; and which the corruption, by demonstrating the undoubted antiquity of one beyond the other, whereby we must do as *Archimedes* did by the crown of *Hiero*, find out the exact proportions of truth and falsehood which lay in all those *Heathen Fables*.

Apud Orig.
c. Celsi. 4.
p. 174, 179.

And this now leads to the third account, why truth is so hardly discerned from error, even by those who search after it, which is the great obscurity of the History of Ancient Times, which should decide the Controversie. For there being an universal agreement in some common principles, and a frequent resemblance in particular traditions, we must of necessity, for the clearing the truth from its corruption, have

Seet. 14.

recourse to ancient history, to see if thereby we can find out where the *Original tradition* was best preserved, by what means it came to be corrupted, and whereby we may distinguish those corruptions from the Truths to which they are annexed : Which is the design and subject of our future discourse, viz. to demonstrate that there was a certain *Original and general tradition* preserved in the World concerning the eldest Ages of the World; that this tradition was gradually corrupted among the Heathens; that notwithstanding this corruption there were sufficient remainders of it to evidence its true *Original*; that the full account of this tradition is alone preserved in those books we call the *Scriptures* : That where any other history seems to cross the report contained in them, we have sufficient ground to question their credibility; and that there is sufficient evidence to clear the undoubted certainty of that history which is contained in the *Sacred Records of Scripture*. Wherein we shall observe the same method which *Thales* took in taking the height of the *Pyramids*, by measuring the length of their shadow; so shall we the height and antiquity of truth from the extent of the fabulous corruptions of it. Which will be a work of so much the greater difficulty, because the truth we pursue after takes covert in so great antiquity, and we must be forced to follow its most flying footsteps through the dark and shady paths of *antient History*. For though history be frequently called the *Light of Truth*, and the *Herald of Times*, yet that light is so faint and dim, especially in *Heathen Nations*, as not to serve to discover the face of Truth from her counterfeit error; and that *Herald* so little skill'd as not to be able to tell us which is of the *Elder house*. The reason is, though Truth beal-ways of greater *Antiquity*, yet *Error* may have the more wrinkled Face, by which it often imposeth on such who guess antiquity by deformity, and think nothing so old as that which can give the least account of its own age. This is evidently the case of those who make the pretence of *ancient history* a plea for *Infidelity*, and think no argument more plausible to impugn the certainty of *Divine Revelation* with, than the seeming repugnancy of some pretended histories with the account of *ancient time* reported in the *Bible*. Which
being

being a pretext so *unworthy*, and designed for so ill an end, and so frequently made use of, by such who account *Infidelity* a piece of *antiquity* as well as *reason*, it may be worth our while to shew, that it is no more liable to be *baffled* with *reason*, than to be *confuted* by *Antiquity*.

In order therefore to the removing of this stumbling block in our way, I shall first evince that there is no certain credibility in any of those antient histories which seem to contradict the Scriptures, nor any ground of reason why we should assent to them, when they differ from the Bible: and then prove that all those undoubted characters of a most certain and authentick history are legible in those records contained in Scripture. Whereby we shall not only shew the unreasonableness of *Infidelity*, but the rational evidence which our faith doth stand on as to these things. I shall demonstrate the first of these, viz. that there is no ground of assent to any ancient histories which give an account of things different from the Scriptures, from these arguments; The apparent defect, weakness, and insufficiency of them as to the giving an account of elder times, The monstrous confusion, ambiguity, and uncertainty of them in the account which they give; The evident partiality of them to themselves, and inconsistency with each other. I begin with the first of these, the defect and insufficiency of them to give in such an account of elder times as may amount to certain credibility; which if cleared, will of itself be sufficient to manifest the incompetency of those records, as to the laying any foundation for any firm assent to be given to them. Now this defect and insufficiency of those histories is either more general, which lies in common to them all, or such as may be observed in a particular consideration of the histories of those several Nations which have pretended high-
eith to *Antiquity*.

Sett. 15.

The General defect is the want of timely records to preserve their histories in. For it is most evident, that the truest history in the world is liable to various corruptions through length of time, if there be no certain way of preserving it entire. And that, through the frailty of memory in those who had integrity to preserve it, through the gradual increase of Barbarism and Ignorance, where there are no wayes of
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Sett. 16.

instruction, and through the subtilty of such whose interest it may be to corrupt and alter that tradition. If we find such infinite variety and difference of men, as to the histories of their own times, when they have all possible means to be acquainted with the truth of them; what account can we imagine can be given by those who had no certain way of preserving to posterity the most authentick relation of former Ages? Especially, it being most evident, that where any certain way of preserving tradition is wanting, a people must soon degenerate into the greatest stupidity and Barbarism, because all will be taken up in minding their own petty concerns, and no encouragement at all given to such publick Spirits, who would mind the credit of the whole Nation. For what was there for such to employ themselves upon, or spend their time in, when they had no other kind of Learning among them, but some general traditions conveyed from Father to Son, which might be learned by such who followed nothing but domestick employments? So that the sons of Noah, after their several dispersons and plantations of several Countries, did gradually degenerate into Ignorance and Barbarism: for upon their first settling in any Countrey, they found it employment sufficient to cultivate the Land, and fit themselves habitations to live in, and to provide themselves of necessaries for their mutual comfort and subsistence. Besides this, they were often put to removes from one place to another, where they could not conveniently reside (which Thucydides speaks much of as to the ancient state of Greece) and it was a great while before they came to embody themselves together in Towns and Cities, and from thence to spread into Provinces, and to settle the bounds and extents of their Territories. The first age, after the plantation of a Countrey being thus spent, the next saw it necessary to fall close to the work of husbandry, not only to get something out of the earth for their subsistence; but when by their Diligence they had so far improved the ground, that they had not only enough for themselves, but to spare to others, they then found out a way for commerce one with another by Exchange. This way of traffick made them begin to raise their hopes higher of enriching themselves; which when some

some of them had *done*, they bring the poorer under their power, and reign as *Lords* over them; these *rich* with their dependants strive to *outriv* each other, whence came *wars* and mutual contentions, till they who got the *better* over their adversaries, took still greater authority into their hands (thence at first every *City* almost, and adjacent *Territory*, had a *King* over it) which by *conflicting* with each other, at last brought several *Cities* and *Territories* under the power of one particular person, who thereby came to reign as *sole Monarch* over all within his *dominions*.

For although there be some reason to think that the *Leaders* of several *Colonies* had at first *superiority* over all that went with them; yet there being evidence in few *Nations* of any continued *succession* of *Monarchs* from the posterity of *Noah*, and so great evidence of so many petty *royalties* almost in every *City* (as we read of such *multitudes* of *Kings* in the small territory of *Canaan*, when *Joshua* conquered it) this makes it at least *probable* to me, that after the death of the first *Leader*, by reason of their poverty and dispersedness of *habitations*, they did not incorporate generally into any *Civil* government under one head, but did rise by degrees in the manner before set down; but yet so, that in the petty divisions some prerogative might be given to him who derived his pedigree the nearest from the first *Founder* of that plantation; which in all probability is the meaning of *Thucydides*, who tells us when the riches of *Greece* began to increase, and their power improved, *Tyrannies* were erected in most *Cities* (*ωςπερ εν ὧ ἡσαν ὀπὶ ῥητοῖς ἡγεσι πατερικὰ βασιλείαι*, for before that time *Kingdoms* with honours limited were hereditary) for so the *Scholiast* explains it, *πατερικὰ βασιλείαι ἀπὸ τῶ πατρὸς παρλαμ. βαρὺμενοι καὶ διαδοχὴν γίνεσθαι*. This then being the state and case of most *Nations* in the first ages after their plantation, there was no likelihood at all of any great improvement in knowledge among them; nay so far from it, that for the first ages, wherein they conflicted with poverty and necessity, there was a necessary decay among them, of what knowledge had been conveyed to them; because their necessities kept them in continual employment; and after that they conquered them, they began to conquer each other, that till

Secl. 17.

*Lib. 1. hist.
p. 10. Ed. Port.*

such time as they were settled in peace under established Commonwealths, there was no leisure, nor opportunity for any Arts or Sciences to flourish, without which all certain histories of their own former state must vanish and dwindle into some fabulous stories. And so we find they did in most Nations, which thence are able to give no other account of themselves, but that they sprung out of the earth where they lived; from which opinion the Athenians used to wear of old their golden grasshoppers, as Thucydides relates. What account can we then expect of ancient times from such Nations which were so defective in preserving their own Originals?

Sett. 18.

Now this defectiveness of giving testimony of ancient times by these Nations, will further appear by these two considerations: First, what ways there are for communicating knowledge to posterity. Secondly, how long it was ere these Nations came to be Masters of any way of certain communicating their conceptions to their Successors. Three general ways there are whereby knowledge may be propagated from one to another; by representative Symbols, by speech, and by letters. The first of these was most common in those elder times, for which purpose Clemens Alexandrinus produceth the testimony of an ancient Grammarian Dionysius Thrax in his Exposition of

Strom. l. 5.

the symbol of the wheels: ἱσημανον γὰρ ἔδιδάξεως μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ συμβόλων ἔνιοι τὰς πράξεις: That some persons made a representation of their acts to others, not only by speech, but by symbols too. Which any one who is any ways conversant in the Learning of those ancient times, will find to have been the chief way of propagating it (such as it was) from one to another, as is evident in the Hieroglyphicks of the Egyptians, and the custom of symbols from thence derived among the Grecian Philosophers, especially the Pythagoreans. It was the solemn custom of the Egyptians to wrap up all the little knowledge they had under such mystical representations, which were unavoidably clogged with two inconveniences very unsuitable to the propagation of knowledge, which were obscurity and ambiguity: for it not only cost them a great deal of time to gather up such symbolical things which might represent their conceptions; but when they had pitched

pitched upon them, they were liable to a great variety of interpretations, as is evident in all those remainders of them, preserved by the Industry of some ancient Writers, as in their *ναματα*, or golden Images of the Gods, they had engraved two dogs, an hawk, and an Ibis. By the dogs some understood the two Hemispheres, others the two Tropicks; by the hawk some understood the Sun, others the Equinoctial; by the Ibis some the Moon, others the Zodiack, as is evident in Clemens, who reports it. This way then is a most unfit way to convey any ancient tradition, by being both obscure, ambiguous, and unable to express so much as to give any certain light to future ages of the passages of the precedent.

The other ways of conveying knowledge, are either by *Sect. 19.*
speech, or by letters. The first must be by some vocal Cabbala delivered down from Father to Son: but words being of so perishing a nature, and mans memory so weak and frail in retaining them, it is necessary for a certain communication of knowledge, that some way should be found out more lasting than words, more firm than memory, more faithful than tradition: which could not otherwise be imagined, than that the Author of his own conceptions should himself leave them to the view of all posterity; in order to which, some way must be contrived whereby mens voices might be seen, and mens fingers speak. But how to express all kind of sounds, with the several draughts of a pen, and to confine them within the compass of 24 letters, is deservedly called by Galileo, *admirandarum omnium inventionum humanarum signaculum*, the choicest of all humane inventions. And had we no other evidence of the great obscurity of ancient history, the great difference as to the first inventor of letters, would be a sufficient demonstration of it. For almost every Nation hath had a several Author of them: The Jews derive them from Adam or Moses; the Egyptians attribute their invention to Thoyt or Mercury; the Grecians to Cadmus, the Phenicians to Taautus, the Latins to Saturn, others to the Ethiopians: And lest the Pygmies should be without their enemies, some think they were found out à *grunum volatu*, from the manner of the flying of Cranes.

Thus it hath happened with most Nations; what was first among themselves, they thought to be the first in the world.

Scit. 20.

But by whomsoever they were first *invented*, we are certain they were but *lately in use* in that Nation, which hath most vainly arrogated the most to it self in point of *Antiquity*, and yet had the least reason (I mean the *Grecians*.) Thence the *Egyptian Priest Patinet* truly told *Solon*, the *Greeks* were always *children*, because they had nothing of the *antiquities* of former ages. If we may believe *Josephus*, they had no writings earlier than *Homer*; but herein he is conceived to have served his cause too much, because of the *Inscription* of *Amphytrio* at *Thebes*, in the Temple of *Apollo Ismenius* in the old *Ionick* letters, and two others of the same age to be seen in *Herodotus*, and because of the writings of *Lycus*, *Orpheus*, *Musaeus*, *Oroeabantius*, *Trazenius*, *Thaletas*, *Melissander*, and others. This we are certain of, the *Grecians* had not the use of letters among them till the time of *Cadmus*, the *Phenicians* coming into *Greece*, whither he came to plant a Colony of *Phenicians* there, whence arose the story of his pursuit of *Europa*, as *Conon* in *Phorius* tells us.

Procl. in Timoc.
App. l. 8.

Hist. l. 56

V. Boch. Geogr.
p. 2. l. 1. c. 20.

Apud Phot.
Biblioth. l. 37.

And it is very probable which learned men have long since observed, that the name *Cadmus* comes from the Hebrew קדמ and may relate as an appellative either to his dignity, as *Junius* in his *Academia* conjectures, or more probably to his Country, the *East*, which is frequently call'd קדמ in Scripture. Some have conjectured further, that his proper name was מוס, upon what reason I know not, unless from hence, that thence by a duplication of the word, came the Greek Ωγγος, who seems to have been no other than *Cadmus*, as will appear by comparing their stories together. Only one was the name his memory was preserved by at *Athens*, where the *Cadmeans* inhabited, as appears by the *Gephyraei* whom *Herodotus* tells us were *Phenicians* that came with *Cadmus*, (and others fancy the *Academia* there was originally called *Cadmea*) and the name *Cadmus* was preserved chiefly among the *Beotians* in memory of the Country whence he came: It being likely to be imposed by them upon his first landing in the Country, as many learned per-

Hist. l. 5.

persons conceive the name of an Hebrew was given to Abraham by the Canaanites upon his passing over the river Euphrates. On this account then it stands to reason, that the name which was given him as a stranger, should be longest preserved in the place where it was first imposed. Or if we take קדם in the other sense, as it imports antiquity; so there is still a higher probability of the affinity of the names of Cadmus and Ogyges; for this is certain, that the Greeks had no higher name for a matter of Antiquity, than to call it Ωγυγον, as the Scholiast on Hesiod, Hesychius, Suidas, Eustathius on Dionysius, and many others observe. And which yet advanceth the probability higher, Lactatius or Lactantius the Scholiast on Statius, tells us, the other Greeks had this from the Thebans; for saith he, *Thebant res antiquas Ogygias nominabant*. But that which puts it almost beyond meer probability, is, that Varro, Festus, Pausanias, Apollonius, Æschylus, and others make Ogyges the founder of the Beotian Thebes, which were thence called Ogygia; and Strabo and Stephanus ~~ὡς~~ πόλεων further say, that the whole County of Beotia was called Ogygia; now all that mention the story of Cadmus, attribute to him the founding of the Beotian Thebes. And withal it is observable that in the Vatican Appendix of the Greek Proverbs, we read Cadmus called Ogyges; Ωγύγια καὶ ὅτι ἦν ὁκλήρων ἐπεὶ συνέβη Κάδμου ἢ Ωγύγην διὰ τὰς θυγατέρας κακοῖς περιπεσεῖν. Meursius indeed would have it corrected, Κάδμου ἢ Ωγύγης, as it is read in Suidas; but by the favour of so learned a man, it seems more probable that Suidas should be corrected by that, he bringing no other evidence of any such person as Cadmus a son of Ogyges, but only that reading in Suidas; whereas we have discovered many probable grounds to make them both the same. That which I would now infer from hence is, the utter impossibility of the Greeks giving us any certain account of ancient times, when a thing so modern in comparison as Cadmus his coming into Greece, is thought by them a matter of so great antiquity, that when they would describe a thing very ancient, they described it by the name of Ogyges, who was the same with Cadmus. Now Cadmus his coming into Greece, is generally, by Historians, placed

In Theb. l. I.

Cent. 4.
Prov. 52.

De Regno Att.
Lib. 8. c. 5.

about the time of *Joshua*, whence some (I will not say how happily) have conjectured, that *Cadmus* and his company were some of the *Canaanites* who fled from *Joshua*, as others are supposed to have done into *Africa*, if *Procopius* his pillar hath strength enough to bear such a conjecture. But there is too great a confusion about the time of *Cadmus* his arrival in *Greece*, to affirm any thing with any great certainty about it.

De Idol. l. I.
c. 13.

Strom. I.

Yet those who disagree from that former Computation, place it yet lower. *Vossius* makes *Agenor*; *Cadmus* his Father, contemporary with the latter end of *Moses*, or the beginning of *Joshua*; and so *Cadmus* his time must fall somewhat after. *Jac. Capellus* placeth *Cadmus* in the third year of *Othoniel*. *Parus* the Author of the *Greek Chronicle* in the *Marmora Arundelliana* makes his coming to *Greece* to be in the time of *Hellen* the son of *Dencalion*; which *Capellus* fixeth on the 73. of *Moses*, A. M. 2995. But Mr. *Selden* conceives it somewhat lower: and so it must be, if we follow *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who placeth it in the time of *Lyncus* King of the *Argives*, which he saith was ἐν δακτύλῳ ὕστερον Μωϋσέως γενεᾷ, in the 11 Generation after *Moses*, which will fall about the time of *Samuel*: But though it should be so late, it would be no wonder it should be reckoned a matter of so great antiquity among the *Grecians*; for the eldest Records they have of any King at *Athens*, begin at the time of *Moses*, whose co-temporary *Cecrops* is generally thought to be; for at his time it is the *Parian Chronicle* begins. Now that the *Grecians* did receive their very letters from the *Phenicians* by *Cadmus*, is commonly acknowledged by the most learned of the *Greeks* themselves, as appears by the ingenuous confession of *Herodotus*, *Philostratus*, *Critias* in *Athenaeus*, *Zenodotus* in *Laertius*, *Timon Phliasius* in *Sixtus-Empiricus*, and many others: so that it were to no purpose to offer to prove that, which they who arrogate so much to themselves, do so freely acknowledge. Which yet hath been done to very good purpose by *Joseph Scaliger* and *Bochartus*, and many others from the form of the Letters, the order and the names of them. It seems probable that at first they might use the form of the *Phenician Letters*, in which

Not. in Euseb.
Chron. n. 16 17.
Geogr. p. 2. l. 1.
cap. 20.

which *Herodotus* tells us the three old *Inscriptions* were extant; and *Diodorus* tells us, that the *brass pot* which *Cadmus* offered to *Minerva Lyndia*, had an *Inscription* on it in the *Phenician Letters*, but afterwards the form of the *Letters* came by degrees to be *changed*, when for their greater expedition in writing they left the old way of writing towards the left hand, for the more natural and expedite way of writing towards the right, by which they exchanged the *sites* of the *strokes* in several *Letters*, as is observed by the forecited *Learned Authors*.

Not that the old *Ionick Letters* were nearer the *Phenician*, and distinct from the *modern*, as *Jos. Scaliger* in his learned *Discourse* on the *original of the Greek Letters* conceives; for the *Ionick Letters* were nothing else but the full *Alphabet* of 24. with the additions of *Palamedes*, and *Simonides Cous*; as *Pliny* tells us, that all the *Greeks* consented in the use of the *Ionick Letters*; but the old *Attick Letters* came nearer the *Phenician*, because the *Athenians*, long after the *Alphabet* was increased to 24. continued still in the use of the old 16. which were brought in by *Cadmus*, which must needs much alter the way of writing; for in the old *Letters*, they writ *THEOS* for *Θεός*, which made *Pliny*, with a great deal of learning and truth, say, that the old *Greek Letters* were the same with the *Roman*. Thence the *Greeks* called their ancient *Letters* *Ἀρχαῖα γράμματα*, as appears by *Harpocration* and *Hesychius*, not that they were so much distinct from others, but because they did not admit of the addition of the other eight *Letters*, which difference of writing is in a great measure the cause of the different dialect between the *Athenians* and *Ionians* properly so called.

We see then the very *Letters* of the *Greeks* were no elder than *Cadmus*; and for any considerable learning among them, it was not near so old. Some assert indeed that *History* began from the time of *Cadmus*; but it is by a mistake of him for a younger *Cadmus*, which was *Cadmus Milesius*, whom *Pliny* makes to be the first *Writer* in *Prose*; but that he after attributes to *Pherecydes Syrius*, and *History* to *Cadmus Milesius*: and therefore I think it far more probable, that

*ix Ensch.
n. 1617.*

Hist. l. 7. c. 57.

*v. Maussacum
in Harpocr.
Salmas. in
Consecrat.
Templ. p. 30.*

Secl. 18.

*Nat. hist. l. 5.
c. 29. l. 7. c. 57.*

Strom. l. 6.

that it was some writing of this latter *Cadmus*, which was transcribed and epitomized by *Bion Proconesius*, although *Clemens Alexandrinus* seems to attribute it to the *Elder*. We see how unable then the *Grecians* were to give an account of elder times, that were guilty of so much *infancy* and *nonage*, as to begin to learn their *Letters* almost in the *noon-tide* of the *World*, and yet long after this to the *time* of the first *Olympiad* all their relations are accounted *fabulous*. A fair account then we are like to have from them of the first *antiquities* of the world, who could not *speak plain truth* till the world was above 3000 years old; for so it was when the *Olympiads* began.

So true is the observation of *Justin Martyr*, ἡ δὲ ἐλληνική πρὸ τῶν Ὀλυμπιάδων ἀκριβὲς ἰσότης, the *Greeks* had no exact history of themselves before the *Olympiads*; but of that more afterwards.

This is now the first *defect* which doth infringe the *credibility* of these *Histories*, which is the want of *timely and early records* to digest their own history in.

CHAP. II.

Of the *Phenician* and *Egyptian* History.

The particular defect in the History of the most learned Heathen Nations. First the Phenicians. Of Sanchoniathon, his Antiquity, and fidelity. Of Jerom-baal, Baal-Berith. The Antiquity of Tyre. Scaliger vindicated against Bochartus Abinalus. The vanity of Phenician Theology. The imitation of it by the Gnosticks. Of the Egyptian History. The Antiquity and Authority of Hermes Trismegistus. Of his Inscriptions on Pillars, transcribed by Manetho. His Fabulousness thence discovered. Terra Seriadica. Of Seths Pillars in Josephus, and an account whence they were taken.

HAVING already shewed a general defect in the ancient Heathen Histories, as to an account of ancient times ; we now come to a closer , and more particular consideration of the Histories of those several Nations which have born the greatest name in the world for learning and antiquity. There are four Nations chiefly which have pretended the most to antiquity in the learned world , and whose Historians have been thought to deliver any thing contrary to Holy Writ in their account of ancient times, whom on that account we are obliged more particularly to consider ; and those are the *Phenicians*, *Chaldeans*, *Egyptians*, and *Grecians* ; we shall therefore see what evidence of credibility there can be in any of these, as to the matter of antiquity of their Records, or the Histories taken from them. And the credibility of an Historian depending much upon the certainty and authority of the Records he makes use of: we shall both consider of what value and antiquity the pretended Records are, and particularly look into the age of the several Historians. As to the *Grecians*, we have seen already an utter impossibility of having any ancient Records among them, because they wanted the means of preserving them, having

Sect. 1.

so lately borrowed their *Letters* from other *Nations*. Unless as to their account of times they had been as careful as the old *Romans* were to number their years by the several *clavi*, or *nails*, which they fixed on the *Temple* doors: which yet they were not in any capacity to do, not growing up in an entire body, as the *Roman Empire* did, but lying so much scattered and divided into so many petty *Republicks*, that they minded very little of concernment to the whole *Nation*. The other three *Nations* have deservedly a name of far greater antiquity than any the *Grecians* could ever pretend to; who yet were unmeasurably guilty of an impotent affectation of antiquity; and arrogating to themselves, as growing on their own ground, what was with a great deal of pains and industry gathered but as the gleanings from the fuller harvest of those *Nations* they resorted to. Which is not only true as to the greatest part of their *Learning*, but as to the account likewise they give of ancient times; the chief and most ancient *Histories* among them being only a corruption of the *Histories* of the elder *Nations*; especially *Phœnicia* and *Agypt*: for of these two *Philo Byblus* the *Translator* of the ancient *Phœnician* Historian *Sanhoniathon*, saith, they were παλαιότατοι ἅπ' ὅλης Βαβυλῶνος, παρ' ὧν καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ παρέλαβον ἀνδρωποι, The most ancient of all the *Barbarians*, from whom the others derived their *Theology*; which he there particularly instanceth in.

Apud Euseb.
pres. Evang.
l. i. c. 8. p. 23.
Ed. R. St.

Sett. 2.

We begin therefore with the *Phœnician History*, whose most ancient and famous *Historian* is *Sanhoniathon*, so much admired and made use of by the shrewdest antagonist ever *Christianity* met with, the *Philosopher* *Porphyrus*. But therein was seen the wonderful providence of *God*, that out of this eater came forth meat, and out of the *Lion* Honey; that the most considerable testimonies by him produced against our *Religion*, were of the greatest strength to refute his own. For he being of too great *Learning* to be satisfied with the vain pretences of the *Gracians*, he made it his business to search after the most ancient *Records*, to find out somewhat in them to confront with the antiquity of the *Scriptures*; but upon his search could find none

of

of greater *veneration* than the *Phœnician History*, nor any Author contending for age with this *Sanchoniathon*. Yet when he had made the most of his *Testimony*, he was fain to yield him *younger* than *Moses*, though he supposeth him elder than the *Trojan Wars*. And yet herein was he guilty of a most gross *ἀνισογνώστια*, not much exceeding the *Gracians* in his skill in *Chronology*, when he makes *Semiramis* coexistent with the *Siege of Troy*: as is evident in his *testimony* produced at large by *Eusebius* out of his *fourth book* against the *Christians*; nay, he goes to prove the truth of *Sanchoniathons* History by the agreement of it with that of *Moses* concerning the *Jews*, both as to their names and places. *ισοεστὶ δὲ τὰ πρὸς Ἰερὺ βαλ-
αν ἀληθέστατα ὅτι τοῖς τόποις καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν αὐτῶν τὰ συμφωνότατα*: whereby he doth evidently assert the greater Truth and Antiquity of *Moses* his History, when he proves the truth of *Sanchoniathons* from his consonancy with that.

Præp. Evang.
l. 10. c. 8. p. 285.

Two things more *Porphyrie* insists on to manifest his *credibility*; the one I suppose relates to what he reports concerning the *Jews*, the other concerning the *Phœnicians* themselves. For the first, that he made use of the Records of *Jerombaal* the Priest of the God *Ieno*, or rather *Iao*; for the other, that he used all the Records of the several Cities, and the sacred inscriptions in the Temples. Who that *Jerombaal* was, is much discussed among learned men, the finding out of which, hath been thought to be the most certain way to determine the age of *Sanchoniathon*. The learned *Bochartus* conceives him to be *Gideon*, who in Scripture is called *Jerub-baal*, which is of the same sense in the *Phœnician* language, only after their custom changing one *b* into *m*, as in *Ambubaje*, *Sambuca*, &c. but admitting the conjecture of this learned person concerning *Jerub-baal*, yet I see no necessity of making *Sanchoniathon* and him contemporary; for I no where find any thing mentioned in *Porphyrie* implying that, but only that he made use of the Records of *Jerub-baal*, which he might very probably do at a considerable distance of time from him, whether by those *ἱστορίαι*, we mean the *Annals* written by him; or the Records

Scct. 3.

Geogr. Sacra.
2. l. 2. c. 17.

Judg. 8.33.

concerning his *actions*; either of which might give *Sancho-
niathon* considerable *light* into the *history* either of the *Israe-
lites* or *Phenicians*. And it is so much the more probable,
because presently after the death of *Gideon*, the *Israelites*
worshipped *Baal-berith*; by which most probably is meant
the *Idol* of *Berith* or *Berytus*, the place where *Sancho-
niathon* lived; by which means the *Berytians* might come ea-
sily acquainted with all the remarkable passages of *Jerub-
baal*.

Sect. 4.

But I cannot conceive how *Sancho-
niathon* could be co-
temporary with *Gideon* (which yet if he were, he falls 182.
years short of *Moses*) especially because the *building* of
Tyre, which that *Author* mentions as an *ancient* thing (as
hath been observed by *Scaliger*) is by our best *Chronologers*
placed about the time of *Gideon*, and about 65. years be-
fore the *destruction* of *Troy*. I know *Bochartus* to avoid
this argument, hath brought some *evidence* of several places
called *Tyrus* in *Phœnicia*, from *Scylax* his *Periplus*; but
none, that there was any more than one *Tyrus* of any great
repute for *antiquity*. Now this *Tyrus* *Josephus* makes but
240 years elder than *Solomons Temple*, and *Justin* but one
year elder than the *destruction* of *Troy*. Neither can any
account be given why *Sidon* should be so much *celebrated* by
ancient *Poets*, as *Strabo* tells us, when *Tyre* is not so much
as mentioned by *Homer*, if the famous *Tyre* were of so
great *antiquity* and *repute* as is pretended. It cannot be de-
nied but that there is mention in *Scripture* of a *Tyre* elder
than this we speak of, which we read of *Joshua* 19. 29. which
some think to be that which was called *Palatyrus*, which
Strabo makes to be 30 *furlongs* distant from the great *Tyre*;
but *Pliny* includes *Palatyrus* within the circumference of
Tyre, and so makes the whole *circuit* of the *City* to be 19
miles. It is not to me so certain to what place the name of
Palatyrus refers, whether to any *Tyrus* before the first
building of the great *Tyre*, or to the ruins of the great *Tyre*
after its *destruction* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, compared with the
new *Tyre*, which was built more inward to the *Sea*, and
was after *besieged* by *Alexander the great*. It may seem proba-
ble that *Palatyrus* may relate to the ruins of the great *Tyre*,
in

Not in fragm.
Græc. p. 40.

Antiq. l. 8.

Geogr. l. 16.

Hist. Nat. l. 5.
c. 12.

in that it was after included in its *circuit*, and chiefly because of the *prediction* in *Ezekiel* 26. 4. *Thou shalt be built no more; for the Tyre erected after, was built not on the Continent, but almost in the Sea.* If so, then *Palatyrus*, or the old famous *Tyrus* might stand upon a rock upon the brink of the *Continent*, and so the great argument of *Bochartus* is easily answered, which is, *That after it is mentioned in Sanchoniathons history, that Hypsouranius dwelt in Tyre upon the falling out between him and his brother Ufous, Ufous first adventured εἰς θάλασσαν ἐμβῆναι, to go to sea, which, faith he, evidently manifests that the Tyre mentioned by Sanchoniathon was not the famous Insular Tyrus, but some other Tyre.* This argument, I say, is now easily answered, if the famous *Tyre* before its destruction by *Nebuchadnezzar* did stand upon the *Continent*; for then it might be the old famous *Tyre* still, notwithstanding what *Sanchoniathon* speaks of the first venturing to sea after *Tyre* was built. So then I conceive these several ages agreeable to the same *Tyre*; the first was when it was a high strong rock on the sea side without many inhabitants; so I suppose it was when mentioned by *Joshua* as the bound of the tribe of *Ashur*. The second Age was, when it was built a great City by the *Sidonians* upon the former place, and grew very populous and famous, which lasted till *Nebuchadnezzars* time; after this, though it were never built up in the *Continent* again; yet a little further into the sea, a new and goodly City was erected, which was called new *Tyre*, and the remains on the *Continent* side *Palatyrus*. Thus far then we have made good *Scaligers* opinion against *Bochartus*, that the famous *Sanchoniathon* is not so old as he is pretended to be.

Which will be further manifest, if that *Abibalus*, to whom *Sanchoniathon* is supposed to dedicate his *History*, were the Father to *Hiram*, co-temporary with *Solomon*, as *Jos. Scaliger* supposeth, who was 154. years after the destruction of *Troy*. In the *Tyrian Dynasties* produced by *Scaliger* out of the *Phenician Annals*, this *Abibalus* is the first who occurs, and is co temporary with *David*: *Sanchoniathon* then is of no great antiquity, if this were the time he lived in. But *Bochartus* well observes, that it is not spoken of *Abibalus* King

Sett. 5.

Not. in Euseb. Chr. p. 12.

canon. Isag. l. 2.

De hist. Græc.
l. i. c. i.

of Tyre, but of *Abibalus* King of *Berytus*, whom we may allow to be somewhat nearer the time of *Moses* than the other *Abibalus*, as the *Phœnician Annals* make it appear, as *Porphyrie* tells us; but yet we find his antiquity is not so great as to be able to contest with *Moses*, as *Porphyrie* himself confesseth, although we may freely acknowledge him to be far elder than any of the *Greek Historians*; which is all *Vossius* contends for, and sufficiently proves; but we are far from yielding him co-temporary with *Semiramis*, as *Porphyrie* would have him, and yet makes him junior to *Moses*, and to live about the time of the *Trojan war*, which is to reconcile the distance of near 800 years: such miserable confusion was there in the best learned *Heathens* in their computation of ancient times.

Secl. 6.

Having thus cleared the antiquity of *Sanchoniathon*, and the *Phœnician History*, we are next to consider the fidelity of it. This *Sanchoniathon* is highly commended for, both by *Porphyrie*, and his Translator into Greek, *Philo Byblius*, who lived in *Adrians* time; and *Theodoret* thinks his name in the *Phœnician Language* signifies *φιλαλῆθης*, which *Bochartus* endeavours to fetch from thence, and conceives the name to be given him when he set himself to write his History; and he wisheth, and so do we, that he had been then *vir sui nominis*, and made it appear by his writing that he had been a Lover of Truth. *Philo* saith he was *ἀνὴρ πολυμαθὴς, καὶ πολυ-αεὶσμον*, a very learned and inquisitive man; but either he was not so diligent to enquire after, or not so happy to light on any certain Records; or if he did, he was not overmuch a Lover of Truth, in delivering them to the world. How faithful he was in transcribing his history from his records, we cannot be sufficient Judges of, unless we had those books of *Tautus*, and the sacred Inscriptions, and the Records of Cities, which he pretends to take his history from, to compare them together. But by what remains of his history, which is only the first book concerning the *Phœnician Theology* extant in *Eusebius*, we have little reason to believe his History of the world and eldest times, without further proof than he gives of it, there being so much obscurity and confusion in it, when he makes a *Chaos* to be the first beginning of all things,

things, and the *Gods* to come after, makes the *αὐτόχθων* and *γῆνι* the son of *Chryſor* or *Vulcan*, and again the *man* born of earth to be ſeveral generations after *αἰὼν* and *πρωτόγονοι*, who were the firſt mortal men; and yet from the two brethren *τεκνίους* and *αὐτόχθων* came two *Gods*, whereof one was called *Ἄγρεος* and the other *Ἀγρότης*, and this latter was worſhipped with as much *veneration* as any of their *Gods*. Yet from theſe things, as *fooliſh* and *ridiculous* as they are, it is very *probable* the *Gnoſticks* and the ſeveral *ſubdiviſions* of them might take the riſe of their ſeveral *Æones* and *Κυβύβητες*: for here we find *Ἀδὼν* and *πρωτόγονοι* made two of the number of the *Gods*, but the reſt of the names, they according to their ſeveral *ſects* took a liberty of altering, according to their ſeveral *fancies*. This is far more probable to me, than that either *Hefiods* *θεογονία* ſhould be the ground of them; or the opinion of a late German *Divine*, who conceives that *Philo Byblius* did in imitation of the *Gnoſticks*, form this holy ſtory of the *Phœnician Theology*. For although I am far from believing what *Kircher* ſomewhere tells us, that he had once got a ſight of *Sanchoniathon's* Original *Hiſtory* (it being not the firſt thing that learned man hath been deceived in) yet I ſee no ground of ſo much *peeviſhneſs*, as becauſe this *hiſtory* pretends to ſo much antiquity, we ſhould therefore preſently condemn it as a ſigment of the Tranſlator of it. For had it been ſo, the *Antagoniſts* of *Porphyrie*, *Methodius*, *Apollinaris*, but eſpecially *Eufebius*, ſo well verſed in antiquities, would have found out ſo great a cheat: Although I muſt confeſs they were oft times deceived with *pia fraudes*; but then it was when they made for the *Chriſtians*, and not againſt them, as this did. But beſides a *fabulous confuſion* of things together, we have ſome things delivered concerning their *Gods*, which are both contrary to all natural notions of a *Deity*, and to thoſe very common principles of *humanity*, which all acknowledge. As when *χρόν*, or *Saturn*, ſuſpecting his ſon *Sadidus*, deſtroyed him with his own hands, and warr'd againſt his Father *Uranus*, and after deſtroyed him likewise, and buried his brother *Atlas* alive in the earth, which being taken, as *Philo Byblius* contends they ought to be, in the literal ſenſe, are ſuch in-

Job. urſinus
Exerc. 3. ſect. 1.

congruities

congruities to all notions of a *divine nature*, that it is the greatest wonder there should be any that should believe there was any *God*, and believe these were *Gods* together.

Sett. 7.

But although there be so many gross *fables* and *inconsistencies* in this *Phenician Theology*, that are so far from meriting belief in themselves, that it were a sufficient *forfeiture* of reason to say they were *credible*; yet when we have a greater *light* in our hands of *divine revelation*, we may in this *dungeon* find out many excellent remainders of the *ancient tradition*, though miserably corrupted, as concerning the *Creation*, the *Original of Idolatry*, the *invention of Arts*, the *foundation of Cities*; the *story of Abraham*, of which in their due place. That which of all seems the clearest in this *Theology*, is the open owning the *original of Idolatry* to have been from the *consecration* of some eminent persons after their death, who have found out some *useful things* for the world while they were living: which the *subtler Greeks* would not admit of, viz. that the persons they worshipped were once men, which made them turn all into *Allegories* and *Mystical senses* to blind that *Idolatry* they were guilty of the better among the ignorant: which makes *Philo Biblius* so very angry with the *Neoterick Grecians*, as he calls them, ὡς ἂν βεβιασμένους ἐν ἀληθῶς τοῦ περὶ θεῶν μύθους ἐπ' ἀληθείας καὶ φυσικὰς διηγήσεις τε καὶ θεωρίας ἀνάγειν: That with a great deal of force and straining they turned all the stories of the Gods into *Allegories* and *Physical discourses*. Which is all the *Ingenuity* that I know is to be found in this *Phenician Theology*, that therein we find a free acknowledgment of the beginning of the *Heathen Idolatry*: and therefore *Sanchoniathon* was as far from advancing *Porphyries Religion*, as he was in the least from overthrowing the *credibility of Christianity*.

Apud Euseb.
Prep. l. i. c. 6.
p. 23.

Sett. 3.

The next we come to then, are the *Egyptians*; a people so unreasonably given to *fables*, that the wisest action they did was to conceal their *Religion*, and the best office their *Gods* had, was to hold their fingers in their mouths, to command silence to all that came to worship them. But we design not here any set discourse concerning the *vanity* of the *Egyptian The-*

Theology, which yet was so monstrously ridiculous, that even those who were over-run with the height of *Idolatry* themselves, did make it the object of their scorn and laughter. And certainly had we no other demonstration of the greatness of mans *Apostasie* and *degeneracy*, the *Egyptian Theology* would be an *irrefragable evidence* of it: for who could but imagine a strange lowness of spirit in those who could fall down and worship the basest and most contemptible of creatures? Their *Temples* were the best *Hieroglyphicks* of themselves, fair and goodly structures without, but within some *deformed creature* enshrined for *veneration*. But though the *Egyptians* had lost their credit so much as to matters of *Religion*; yet it may be supposed, that they who were so famed for *wisdom* and *antiquity*, should be able to give a full and exact account of themselves through all the *ages* of the world. And this they are so far from being *defective* in, that if you will believe them, they will give you an account of themselves many thousands of years before ever the world was made, but the peculiar *vanity* of their *Chronology* will be handled afterwards: That we now enquire into, is, what certain records they had of their own *antiquity*, which might call for assent from any unprejudiced mind; whether there be any thing really answering that loud and unparallel'd cry of *antiquity* among the *Egyptians*, whereby they will make all other *Nations* in comparison of them to be but of yesterday, and to know nothing. We question not now their pretence to *wisdom* and *learning*, but are the more in hopes to meet with some certain way of satisfaction concerning *ancient times*, where *learning* is supposed to have flourished so much, even when *Greece* it self was accounted *barbarous*.

The great Basis of all the *Egyptian History* depends on the credit of their ancient *Hermes*, whom out of their *veneration* they called *Trismegistus*; for to him they ascribe the first invention of their *learning*, and all excellent *Arts*, from him they derive their *history*; their famous *Historian Manetho*, professing to transcribe his *Dynasties* from the pillars of *Hermes*. We shall therefore first see of what credit and antiquity *Hermes* himself was, and of what account particu-

De nat. Deor.
l. 3.

cularly those pillars were which hold up all the *Fabrick* of *Manetho* his *Dynasties*. For *Hermes* himself, the story concerning him is so various and uncertain, that some have from thence questioned whether ever there were such a person or no, because of the strangely different account that is given of him. *Cotta* in *Tully*, in order to the establishing his *Academical* doctrine of withholding assent, mentions no fewer than five *Mercuries*, of which, two he makes *Egyptian*, one of them the *Hermes* we now speak of, whom the *Egyptians* call *Thoyth*, and was the Author both of their *Laws* and *Letters*. The *Egyptians*, as appears by *Diodorus*, make him to be a sacred Scribe to *Osiris*, and to have instructed *Isis*; and when *Osiris* went upon any warlike expedition, he committed the management of affairs to him for his great wisdom. The *Phenicians* preserve his memory among them too: for *Philo Byblius* saith, that *Sanchoniathon* described his *Theology* from the books of *Taautus*, whom the *Egyptians* call *Thoyth*, who was the first inventer of *Letters*, and was a Counsellor to *Saturn*, whose advice he much relied on. What now must we pitch upon in so great uncertainties? how come the *Phenician* and *Egyptian* *Theology* to come both from the same person, which are conceived so much to differ from each other? If we make the stories of *Osiris* and *Isis* to be fabulous, and meerly *Allegorical*, as *Plutarch* doth, then *Mercury* himself must become an *Allegory*, and the *Father* of *Letters* must be an *Hieroglyphick*. If we admit the *Egyptians* narrations to be real, and seek to reduce them to truth, and thereby make *Osiris* to be *Musraim* the son of *Cham*, who first ruled in *Egypt*, all that we can then affirm of *Hermes*, is, that he might be some useful person, who had a great influence both upon the King and State, and did first settle the Nation in a politick way of government, whose memory on that account the *Egyptians* might preserve with the greatest veneration; and when they were once fallen into that *Idolatry*, of consecrating the memories of the first contributors to the good of mankind, they thought they had the greatest reason to adore his memory, and so by degrees attributed the invention of all useful things to him. For so it is apparent they did, when

Lam-

Iamblichus tells us the Egyptians attributed all their books to Mercury, as the Father of them; because he was reputed the Father of wit and learning, they made all the off springs of their brains to bear their Fathers name. And this hath been the great reason the world hath been so long time imposed upon with varieties of books going under the name of *Hermes Trismegistus*. For he was not the first of his kind, who in the early days of the Christian world obtruded upon the world that Cento or confused mixture of the Christian, Platonick, and Egyptian doctrine, which is extant still under the name of *Hermes Trismegistus*; whose vanity and falshood hath been sufficiently detected by learned men. There were long before his time extant several *Mercurial* books, as they were called, which none of the wiser Heathens did ever look on as any other than Fables and Impostures, as appears by *Porphyries* letter to *Anebo* the Egyptian Priest, and *Iamblichus* his answer to it in his Book of the Egyptian Mysteries.

We have then no certainty at all, notwithstanding the great fame of *Hermes*, of any certain Records of ancient times, unless they be contained in those sacred inscriptions from whence *Manetho* took his history. It must be acknowledged that the most ancient way of preserving any monuments of learning in those elder times, was by these inscriptions on pillars, especially among the Egyptians, as is evident from the several testimonies of *Galen*, *Proclus*, *Iamblichus*, and the author of the Book called *Sapientia secundum Aegyptios*, adjoynd to *Aristotle*, who all concur in this, that what ever laudable invention they had among them, it was inscribed on some pillars, and those preserved in their Temples, which were instead of Libraries to them. *Manetho* therefore to make his story the more probable, pretends to take all his relations from these sacred inscriptions, and as *Eusebius* tells us, translated the whole Egyptian History into Greek, beginning from their Gods, and continuing his History down near the time of *Darius Codomannus*, whom *Alexander* conquered: for in *Eusebius* his *Chronica* mention is made of *Manetho* his History, ending the 16 year of *Araxerxes Ochus*, which, saith *Vossius*, was in the second year

Sect. 10.

Gal. l. 1. c. 10.
c. 1.
Procl. in Tim.
p. 31.
Iamb. de myst.
c. 2. f. 1.
Sap. c. 2. f. 1.

De hist. Græc.
l. 1. c. 14.

of the 107 Olympiad. This *Manetho Sebennytæ* was High Priest of *Heliopolis* in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, at whose request he writ his History, which he digested into three *Tomes*, the first containing the 11 *Dynasties* of the Gods and *Heroes*, the 2d. 8 *Dynasties*, the 3d. 12. all containing, according to his fabulous computation, the summ of 53535 years. These *Dynasties* are yet preserved, being first epitomized by *Julius Africanus*, from him transcribed by *Eusebius* in his *Chronica*, from *Eusebius* by *Georgius Syncellus*, out of whom they are produced by *Jos. Scaliger*, and may be seen both in *Eusebius*, and his *Canones Isagogici*.

Sect. II.

Now *Manetho*, as appears by *Eusebius*, voucheth this as the main testimony of his credibility, that he took his History, ἐκ τῆ ἐν τῇ Σηριαδικῇ γῇ κειμένων στήλων, ἱερᾷ διαλέκτῳ καὶ ἱερογραφικοῖς χαρακασσι κεχαρτισμένῶν ὑπὸ Θωθὶ τῷ πρῶτῳ Ἑρμῇ, καὶ ἑρμηνευμένων μὲν ὑπὸ Κατάκλυσμον ἐκ τῆ ἱερᾶς διαλέκτου εἰς τὴν ἑλληνίδαν φωνὴν χαρακασσιν ἱερογλυφικοῖς, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν εἰκόλοις ὑπὸ τῷ Ἀγαθοδαίμονος τῷ δευτέρῳ Ἑρμῇ, πατρὸς δὲ τῷ Τατῇ ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἔσθ' ἱερῶν Ἀιγυπτίων. From some pillars in the Land of *Seriad*, in which they were inscribed in the sacred dialect by the first *Mercury Thoyth*, and after the flood were translated out of the sacred dialect into the Greek tongue in Hieroglyphick Characters, and are laid up in books among the *Revestries* of the Egyptian Temples, by *Agathodamon*, the second *Mercury*, the Father of *Tat*. Certainly this fabulous author could not in fewer words have more manifested his own *Impostures*, nor blasted his own credit more than he hath done in these; which it is a wonder so many learned men have taken so little notice of, which have found frequent occasion to speak of *Manetho* and his *Dynasties*. This I shall make appear by some great *improbabilities*, and other plain *impossibilities* which are couched in them. The *improbabilities* are, first such pillars, being in such a place as *Seriad*, and that place no more spoken of either by himself, or by any other *Egyptians*, nor any use made of these inscriptions by any other but himself. As to this *terra Seriadica* where it should be, the very learned and inquisitive

snive Joseph Scaliger plainly gives out, and ingenuously professeth his ignorance. For in his *notes* on the fragments of Manetho in Eusebius, when he comes to that ἐν τῇ γῇ Σινεαδίκῃ, he only saith, *Quæ nobis ignota querant Studiosi.* But Isaac Vossius in his late discourses de ætate mundi, cries ἐν τῇ, and confidently perswades himself that it is the same with Seirah, mentioned Judges 3. 16. Indeed were there nothing else to be considered but affinity of names, it might well be the same, but that סִטְרִים which we render the *stone quarries*, should signify these *pillars of Mercury*, is somewhat hard to conceive. The *Seventy* render it, as himself observes, τὰ γλύπτα by which they understand *graven Images*: So the word is used, 2 Chron. 33. 19. Deut. 7. 5. Isa. 10. 19. The *vulgar Latine* renders it *ad locum Idolorum*, which were the certain interpretation, if Chytraus his conjecture were true, that Eglon had lately set up *Idols* there; but if it be meant of *pillars*, I cannot but approve of Junius his interpretation, which I conceive bids fairest to be the genuine sense of the place, viz. that these *stones* here, were the 12 *stones* pitched by Joshua in Gilgal after the Israelites passed over Jordan; and these *stones* are said to be by Gilgal, Judges 3. 19. So that notwithstanding this handsom conjecture, we are as far to seek for the *pillars of Mercury* as ever we were, and may be so to the worlds end. Secondly, the standing of these *pillars* during the flood, which must be supposed certainly to have some singular vertue in them to resist such a torrent of waters, which overthrew the strongest built houses, and most compacted Cities. The plain impossibilities are first, that Manetho should transcribe his *Dynasties* from the beginning of the History of Egypt, to almost the time of Alexander, out of sacred Inscriptions of Thoyth, who lived in the beginning of the very first Dynasty according to his own Computation. Sure this Thoyth was an excellent Prophet, to write an History for above 50000 years to come, as Manetho reckons it. Secondly, it is as well still, that this History after the flood should be translated into Hieroglyphick Characters; what kind of translation is that? we had thought Hieroglyphicks had been representations of

Not. in gr. Euseb. p. 408. De æt. mundi. c. 10.

Josh. 4. 19; 20, 21.

things, and not of sounds and letters, or words: How could this *History* have at first been written in any tongue, when it was in *Hieroglyphicks*? Do *Hieroglyphicks* speak in several *Languages*, and are they capable of changing their tongues? But *thirdly*, it is as good still, that the *second Mercury* or *Agathodæmon* did translate this *History* so soon after the *Flood* into *Greek*: Was the *Greek tongue* so much in request so soon after the *Flood*? that the *Egyptian History* for the sake of the *Greeks* must be translated into their language? Nay, is it not evident from *Herodotus* and *Diodorus*, that the *Grecians* were not permitted so much as any commerce with the *Egyptians*, till the time of *Psammetichus*, which fell out in the 26 *Dynasty* of *Manetho*, and about a *Century* after the *beginning* of the *Olympiads*. We see then how credible an Author *Manetho* is, and what truth there is like to be in the account of ancient times given by the *Egyptian Historians*, when the chief of them so lamentably and ominously stumbles at his very entrance into it.

Herod. l. 2.
Diod. l. c. 67.

Sett. 12.

And yet as *fabulous* as this account is, which *Manetho* gives of his taking his *history* from these *pillars* before the *Flood*, I cannot but think that *Josephus*, an Author otherwise of good credit, took his famous story of *Seth's pillars* concerning *Astronomical observations* before the *flood*, from this story of *Manetho*; and therefore I cannot but look upon them with as *jealous* an eye as on the other, although I know how *fond* the world hath been upon that most ancient monument, as is pretended, of learning in the world. *Du Bartas* hath writ a whole *Poem* on these *pillars*, and the truth is, they are fitter subjects for *Poets* than any else, as will appear on these considerations. First, how strangely *improbable* is it, that the *posterity* of *Seth*, who, as is pretended, did foreknow a *destruction* of the world to be by a *flood*, should busie themselves to write *Astronomical observations* on *pillars*, for the benefit of those who should live after it? Could they think their *pillars* should have some peculiar exemption above stronger *structures*, from the violence of the rough and furious waters? If they believed the *flood* absolutely *universal*, for whom did

did they intend their *observations*? if not, to what end did they make them, when the persons surviving might *communicate* their inventions to them? But *Secondly*, if either one or both these *pillars* remained, whence comes it to pass that neither the *Chaldeans*, nor any of the eldest pretenders to *Astronomy*, should neither mention them, nor make any use of them? *Nay thirdly*, whence came the *study* of *Astronomy* to be so lamentably *defective* in those ancient times, if they had such certain *observations* of the *heavenly bodies* gathered by so much experience of the persons who lived before the Flood? *Fourthly*, how comes *Josephus* himself to neglect this *remarkable testimony* of the *truth* of *Scripture-history* in his *books* against *Appion*, if he had thought it were such as might be relied on? *Fifthly*, how comes *Josephus* so carelessly to set down the place in *Syria* where these *pillars* stood, that inquisitive persons might have satisfied themselves with the sight of the pillar at least, and what kind of *Characters* those *observations* were preserved in? But now, if we compare this of *Josephus* with *Manetho* his story, we shall find them so exactly resemble each other, that we may well judge all those *pillars* to have been taken out of the same *quarry*. Two things make it yet more probable: *First*, the name of the place wherein they stood, which *Eustathius* in *Hexaemeron* takes out of *Josephus*, and calls Σηγεδα, the very same place with that in *Manetho*. The other is the common use of the name of *Seth* among the *Egyptians*, as not only appears by *Plutarch de Iside & Osiride*, but by this very place of *Manetho*, where it follows ἐν βίβλῳ Σώθους; a book of his, bearing the title, which *Vettius Valens Antiochenus* tells us is not called Σώθους but Σηθ. Now therefore *Josephus*, who frequently useth the *Testimony* of *Heathen Writers*, and frequently of this *Manetho*, endeavoured to bring this fabulous relation of *Manetho* as near the truth as he could; therefore instead of *Thoyth* he puts *Seth*, and the fabulous history of *Egypt*, the inventions of the *Patriarchs*, and *Syria* instead of *Seriadica*, a Country too large to find these *pillars* in.

*Apud Scaliger.
not. Gr. p. 438.*

CHAP. III.

Of the Chaldean History.

The contest of Antiquity among Heathen Nations, and the wayes of deciding it. Of the Chaldean Astrology, and the foundation of Judicial Astrology. Of the Zabii, their Founder, who they were, no other than the old Chaldees. Of Berofus and his History. An account of the fabulous Dynasties of Berofus and Manetho. From the Translation of the Scripture history into Greek in the time of Ptolemy. Of that translation and the time of it. Of Demetrius Phalereus. Scaligers arguments answered. Manetho writ after the Septuagint, proved against Kircher; his arguments answered. Of Rabbinical and Arabick Authors, and their little credit in matter of history. The time of Berofus enquired into, his writing co-temporary with Philadelphus.

Sett. I.

THe next whom our Enquiry leads us to, are the *Chaldeans*, a Nation of great and undoubted Antiquity, being in probability the first formed into a National Government after the Flood, and therefore the more capable of having these Arts and Sciences flourish among them, which might preserve the memory of eldest times to the view of posterity. And yet even among these who enjoyed all the advantages of ease, quiet, and a flourishing Empire, we find no undoubted or credible records preserved, but the same vanity as among the *Egyptians*, in arrogating antiquity to themselves beyond all proportion of reason or satisfaction from their own history, to fill up that vast measure of time with, which makes it most probable what *Diodorus* observes of them, that in things pertaining to their arts they made use of Lunar years of 30 dayes; so they had need, when

Biblioth. l. I.

De Divin. l. I.

Tully tells us that they boasted of observations of the Stars for 470000 years, which after *Diodorus* his computation, and the vulgar account of years from the beginning of the world, will

will fall near upon, if not *before* the *Creation*. It had been *impossible* for them to have been so *extravagant* in their *accounts* of themselves, had they but *preserved* the *history* of their *Nation* in any certain *records*. For want of which, the *tradition* of the *eldest times*, varying in the several *families* after their *dispersion*, and being *gradually corrupted* by the *policy* of their *Leaders*, and those *corruptions* readily embraced by the *predominancy* of *self-love* in the several *Nations*, thence arose those *vain* and *eager contests* between the *Chaldeans*, *Scythians*, *Agyptians*, and *Aethiopians*, concerning the *antiquity* of their several *Nations*: which may be seen in *Diodorus*, and others: by which it most evidently appears that they had no certain *history* of their own *Nations*: for none of them insist upon any *Records*, but only upon several *probabilities* from the *nature* of their *Country* and the *Climates* they lived under. Neither need *Psammeticus* have been put to that ridiculous way of deciding the *controversie* by his two *Infants* bred up without any *converse* with men, concluding the *language* they spake would manifest the great *antiquity* of the *Nation* it belonged to: Whereas it is more than *probable* they had spoken none at all, had they not *learned* the *inarticulate voice* of the *Goats* they had more *converse* with than men. The making *use* of such ways to decide this *controversie* doth not only argue the great *weakness* of those *times* as to *natural knowledge*; but the absolute *defect* and *insufficiency* of them, as to the giving any certain *account* of the *state* of *ancient times*.

Of which the *Chaldeans* had advantages above all other *Heathen Nations*, not only living in a settled *Country*, but in or near that very *place* where the grand *Ancestors* of the *World* had their chief *abode* and *residence*. Whereby we see how *unfaithful* a thing *Tradition* is, and how soon it is *corrupted* or *fails*, where it hath no sure *records* to *bottom* its self upon. But indeed it is the less wonder that there should be a *confusion* of *Histories*, where there had been before of *tongues*; and that such whose design and *memory* God had *blasted* before, should afterwards forget their own *original*. But as if the *Chaldeans*

Sect. 2.

had retained something still of their old aspiring mind to reach up to *Heaven*, the only *thing* they were eminent for, and which they were careful in preserving of, was some *Astronomical observations*, which *Tully* tells us they had a great conveniency for, by reason of the plain and even situation of their Country; whereby they might have a larger prospect of the heavenly bodies, than those who lived in mountainous Countries could have. And yet even for this (which they were so famous for, that the name *Chaldeans* passed for *Astrologers* in the *Roman Empire*) we have no very great reason to admire their excellency in it, considering how soon their skill in *Astronomy* dwindled into that which by a great *Catachresis* is called *judicial Astrology*. The original of which is most evident among them, as all other *Heathen Nations*, to have been from the *Divinity* which they attributed to the *Stars*; in which yet they were far more rational than those who now admire that Art: For, granting their hypothesis, that the *Stars* were *Gods*, it was but reasonable they should determine contingent effects; but it is far from being so with them who take away the foundation of all those celestial houses, and yet attribute the same effects to them, which they did, who believed a *Divinity* in them. The *Chaldeans*, as *Diodorus* relates, set 30 *Stars* under the *Planets*; these they called βαλαιοι θεοι; others they had as *Princes* over these, which they called ἄρσες θεων υφελαι; the former were as the privy Counsellors, and these the *Princes* over them, by whom in their courses they supposed the course of the year to be regulated. We see then what a near affinity there was between *Astrology* and the *Divinity* of the *Stars*, which makes *Ptolomy* call them *Atheists* who condemned *Astrology*, because thereby they destroyed the main of their Religion, which was the worshipping the *Stars* for *Gods*. But it seems by *Strabo*, that one of the *Seets* of the *Chaldeans* did so hold to *Astronomy* still, that they wholly rejected *Genethliology*, which caused a great division among the *Orchoini* and the *Borsippeni*, two *Seets* among them, so called from the places of their habitations.

L. 2. Biblioth.

Titab. l. 2.

Geogr. l. 16.

And if we reckon the *Zabii* among the *Chaldeans* as *Seft. 3.*
Maimonides seems to do, we have a further evidence of the
Planetary Deities so much in request among the *Chaldeans*; *More Nevoch.*
 for, the description he gives of them is to this purpose, *P. 3. c. 29.*
that they had no other gods but the Stars to whom they made
statues and images, to the Sun golden, to the Moon silver, and
so to the rest of the Planets of the Metals dedicated to them.
Those Images derived an influence from the Stars to which they
were erected, which had thence a faculty of foretelling future
things; which is an exact description of the sorcery of Talis-
mans so much in request among the Heathens; such as the
Palladium of Troy is supposed by learned men to have been.
These Talismans are by the Jews called Davids bucklers, and
are much of the same nature with the ancient Teraphim,
both being accurately made according to the positions of the
heavens; only the one were to foretell future things, the
other for the driving away some calamity. Concerning
 these *Zabii* *Maimonides* tells us, *that the understanding their*
rites would give a great deal of light to several passages of
Scripture which now lie in obscurity: but little is supposed
 to be yet further known of them than what *Scaliger* hath
 said, that they were the more *Eastern Chaldeans*, which he
 fetcheth from the signification of the word; several of their
 books are extant saith *Scaliger*, among the *Arabians*, but
 none of them are yet discovered to the *European World*.
Salmasius thinks these *Zabii* were the *Chaldeans* inhabiting
Mesopotamia, to which it is very consonant which *Maimo-*
nides saith, that *Abraham* had his education among them. Said
Barricides cited by Mr. *Selden*, attributes the original of their
 religion to the time of *Nahor*, and to *Zaradchath* the *Persian*
 as the Author of it, who is conceived to be the same with
Zoroaster, who in all probability is the same with the
Zertoost of the *Persees*, a *Seft* of the ancient *Persians* living
 now among the *Banyans* in the *Indies*. These give a more
 full and exact account concerning the original, birth, educa-
 tion, and *Enthusiasms*, or *Revelations* of their *Zertoost* than
 any we meet with in any *Greek Historians*; three books they
 tell us of, which *Zertoost* received by *Revelation*, or rather
 one book, consisting of three several tracts, whereof the first

V. Scaliger. ep.
ad Casaub. & Frey.
Gallio. Selden.
de Diis Syris l.
I. c. 2.
Salmas. de An.
Climac. p. 573.

De jure nat. et
gen. l. 2. c. 7.

was concerning *judicial Astrology*, which they call *Astrodeger*; the second concerning *Physick*, or the knowledge of *natural things*; the third was called *Zertooft* from the bringer of it, containing their religious rites; the first was committed to the *Jesopps*, or *Magies*, the second to *Physicians*, the third to the *Darrees* or *Church-men*, wherein are contained the several precepts of their Law; we have likewise the rites and customs of these *Persees* in their worship of fire, with many other particular rites of theirs published some time since by one Mr. Lord, who was a long time resident among them at *Surrat*; by which we may not only understand much of the *Religion* of the ancient *Persians*, but if I mistake not, somewhat of the *Zabii* too. My reasons are, because the ancient *Zaradcha* or *Zoroaster* is by *Said Batricides* made the Author of the *Zabii*, as we have seen already, who was undoubtedly the founder of the *Persian worship*, or rather a promoter of it among the *Persians*; For *Ammianus Marcellinus* tells us that he was instructed in the rites of the *Chaldeans* which he added to the *Persian rites*; besides, their agreement in the chief point of *Idolatry*, the worship of the *Sun*, and consequently the *πυραυδα*, or *Symbol of the Sun*, the *eternal fire*, is evident; which as far as we can learn, was the great and most early *Idolatry* of the Eastern Countries; and further we find God in *Leviticus* 26. 30. threatening to destroy their *מזבחות* *their Images of the Sun*, some render it, but most probably by that word is meant the *πυραυδα*, the *hearths* where they kept their perpetual fire, for those are *המזבחות* from *חמה* which is used both for the *Sun* and *fire*. Now hence it appears that this *Idolatry* was in use among the Nations about *Palestine*; else there had been no need of so severe a threatening against it, and therefore most probably the rites of the *Zabii* (which must help us to explain the reasons of some particular positive precepts in the *Levitical Law* relating to *Idolatry*) are the same with the rites of the *Chaldeans* and *Persians*, who all agreed in this worship of the *Sun* and *Fire*, which may be yet more probable from what *Maimonides* saith of them, that *Gens Zabæa erat gens que implevit totum orbem*; it could not be then any obscure Nation, but such as had the largest spread in the

Eastern

Hist. l. 23.

*Voss. Idol.
l. 2. c. 9.*

Eastern Countries, which could be no other than the ancient *Chaldeans* from whom the *Persians* derived their Worship. It may not seem altogether improbable that *Balaam* the famous *Soothsayer* was one of these *Zabii*, especially if according to *Salmasius* his judgment they inhabited *Mesopotamia*; for *Balaams* Countrey seems to be there; for it is said, *Numb. 22. 5. that he dwelt in Pethor by the river*, i. e. faith the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, in *Peor of Syria by Euphrates*, which in Scripture is called *the river*, *Esa. 8. 7.* But from this great obscurity as to the history of so ancient and so large a people as these *Zabii* are supposed to be, we have a further evidence to our purpose of the defectiveness and insufficiency of the Eastern histories as to the giving any full account of themselves and their own original.

We are told indeed by some, that *Nabonasser* did burn and destroy all the ancient records of the *Chaldeans* which they had diligently preserved amongst them before, on purpose to raise the greater reputation to himself, and blot out the memory of his usurpation, by burning the records of all their own ancient Kings. Which is a conceit I suppose hath no other ground than that the famous *Era* so much celebrated by *Astronomers* and others, did bear the name of *Nabonasser*. Which (if we should be so greedy of all empty conjectures which tend to our purpose as to take them for truths) would be a very strong evidence of the falshood and vanity of the *Chaldeans* in their great pretences to antiquity. But as the case stands in reference to their history we find more evidence from Scripture to assert their just antiquity, than ever they are able to produce out of any undoubted records of their own. Which yet hath been endeavoured by an Author both of some credit and antiquity, the true *Berosus*, not the counterfeit of *Annius*, whose vizard we shall have occasion to pull off afterwards. This *Berosus* was, as *Josephus* and *Tatianus* assure us, a Priest of *Belus* and a *Babylonian* born, but afterwards flourished in the isle of *Co*, and was the first who brought the *Chaldean Astrology* in request among the *Greeks*; in honour to whose name and memory, the *Athenians* (who were never backward in applauding those who brought them the greatest news, especially if

Sect. 4.

C. App. l. i.
c. Græcos.

suitable to their former superstition) erected a statue for him with a gilded tongue. A good emblem of his history which made a fair and specious shew, but was not that within, which it pretended to be : especially where he pretends to give an account of the most ancient times, and reckons up his two Dynasties before the time of Belus : but of them afterwards. It cannot be denied but some fragments of his history, which have been preserved from ruine by the care and industry of Josephus, Tatianus, Eusebius and others, have been very useful, not only for proving the truth of the history of Scripture to the Heathens, but also for illustrating some passages concerning the Babylonian Empire : as making Nabopolassar the Father of Nebucadonosor, of which Scaliger hath fully spoken in his notes upon his fragments.

Append. ad l.
de Emend Temp.

Seet. 5.

Far be it from me to derogate any thing even from prophane Histories, where they do not enterfere with the Sacred history of Scripture ; and it is certainly the best improvement of these to make them draw water to the Sanctuary, and to serve as smaller stars to conduct us in our way, when we cannot enjoy the benefit of that greater light of sacred history. But that which I impeach these prophane Histories of, is only an insufficiency as to that account of ancient times, wherein they are so far from giving light to sacred records, that the design of setting of them up seems to be for casting a cloud upon them. Which may seem somewhat the more probable in that those monstrous accounts of the Egyptian and Chaldean Dynasties did never publicly appear in the world in the Greek Tongue, till the time that our sacred records were translated into Greek at Alexandria. For till that time when this authentick history of the World was drawn forth from its privacy and retirement, (being as it were lockt up before among the Israelites in Judæa) into the publick notice of the World about the time of Ptolomæus Philadelphus, these vain pretenders to antiquity thought not themselves so much concerned to stand up for the credit of their own Nations. For till that time the credulous World not being acquainted with any certain report of the creation and propagation of the world, was apt to swallow any thing that was given forth by those who were had in so great esteem

esteem as the *Chaldean* and *Egyptian Priests* were: Because it was supposed that those *Persons* who were freed from other *avocations*, had more *leisure* to *inquire* into these *things*, and because of their *mysterious* hiding that they had from the *vulgar*, were presumed to have a great deal more than they had. But now when the *Sun of Righteousness* was approaching this *Horizon* of the *world*, and in order to that the *Sacred history* like the *day star* was to give the *World* notice of it, by which the former *shadows* and *mists* began to *flie* away, it concerned all those whose *interest* lay in the former *ignorance* of *mankind*, as much as they could to *raise* all their *ignes fatui* and what ever might *tend* to *obscure* that approaching *light* by *invalidating* the *credit* of that which came to *bespeak* its *acceptance*.

It is very *observable* to consider what *gradations* and *steps* there were in the *World* to the appearance of that *grand light* which came down from *Heaven* to direct us in our way thither; how the *world* not long before was *awakened* into a greater *inquisitiveness* than ever before, how *knowledge* grew into *repute*, and what *methods* *divine providence* used to give the *inquisitive world* a *tast* of *Truth* at present to stay their *stomachs*, and prepare them for that further *discovery* of it afterwards. In order to this that *Nation* of the *Jews*, which was an *inclosed Garden* before, was now *thrown open*, and many of the *plants* removed and set in *forraign Countries*, not only in *Babylon* (where even after their return were left three famous *Schools* of *learning*, *Sora*, *Pumbeditha*, and *Neharda*) but in *Egypt* too, where multitudes of them by *Alexanders* favour were settled at *Alexandria*, where they had opportunity to *season* those two great *fountains*, whence the *current* of *knowledge* ran into the rest of the *World*. And now it was not in *Jewry* only that *God* was *known*, but he whose name was *great* in *Israel*, did make way for the *knowledge* of himself among all the *Nations* of the *earth*. And that all wise *God* who directed the *Magi* by a *star* to *Christ*, making use of their former skill in *Astronomy* to take notice of that *star* which came now on a peculiar *errand* to them to lead them to their *Saviour* (The great *God* condescending so far to *mankind*, as to take advantage of

Sect. 6.

V. Casaub. ad.
in Athenæum
l. 5. c. 9.

of particular *inclinations*, and to *accommodate* himself to them; for which purpose it is very observable that he appeared in another way to the *Wise men*, than to the *poor Shepherds*) the same God made use of the *curiosity* and *inquisitiveness* after knowledge which was in *Protophila*, *delphus* (which he is so much applauded for by *Athenæus* and others) to bring to *light* the most advantageous knowledge which the world ever had before the coming of Christ in the *Flesh*. And that great *Library* of his erecting at *Alexandria* did never deserve that title till it had lodged those *Sacred records*, and then it did far better than the old one of *Osymanduas*, of which *Historians* tell us this was the inscription *Ἰατρειὸν ψυχῶν*, *The shop of the souls Physick*.

Secl. 7.

But this being a matter of so much concernment in order to our better understanding the original of these *vast accounts of time* among the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians*, and a subject not yet touched by any, we shall a little further improve the probability of it, by taking a more particular account of the time when the *Scriptures* were first translated, and the occasion might thereby be given to these *Egyptians* and *Chaldeans* to produce their *fabulous account* into the view of the world. Whether the *Scriptures* had been ever before translated into the *Greek Language*, (though it be asserted by some ancient writers of the Church,) is very questionable, chiefly upon this account, that a sufficient reason cannot be assigned of undertaking a new translation at *Alexandria* if there had been any extant before. Especially if all those circumstances of that translation be true which are commonly received and delivered down to us with almost an unanimous consent of the persons who had greater advantages of knowing the certainty of such things, than we can have at this great distance of time. And therefore certainly every petty conjecture of some modern, though learned men, ought not to bear sway against so unanimous a tradition in a matter of fact, which cannot be capable of being proved but by the testimony of former ages. And it is somewhat strange that the single testimony of one *Hermippus* in *Diogenes Laertius* (whose age and authority is somewhat doubtful) concerning only one particular referring to

Pl. Demetrii.

Demetrius

Demetrius Phalereus, should be thought of force enough among persons of judgement as well as learning, to infringe the credibility of the whole story delivered with so much consent, not only by *Christian*, but *Jewish Writers*; the testimony of one of which (every whit as considerable as *Hermippus*) viz. *Aristobulus Judæus* a *Peripatetical Philosopher* in an *Epistle to Ptolomy Philometor* doth plainly assert that which was so much questioned, concerning *Demetrius Phalereus*.

*Apud Euseb.
præp. Evang.
l. 13.*

But whatever the truth of all the particular circumstances be, which I here enquire not after, nor the authority of that *Aristeus* from whom the story is received, nor whether this translation was made by *Jews* sent out of *Judæa*, or by *Jews* residing at *Alexandria*, it sufficeth for our purpose that this translation was made before either the *Chaldean Dynasties* of *Berosus*, or the *Egyptian* of *Manetho* were published to the *World*. In order to which it is necessary to shew in what time this translation was effected; and herein that channel of tradition which conveys the truth of the thing in one certain course, runs not with so even a stream concerning the exact time of it; all indeed agree that it was about the time of *Ptolomeus Philadelphus*, but in what years of his reign, is very dubious. *Joseph Scaliger* who hath troubled the waters so much concerning the particular circumstances of this translation, yet fully agrees that it was done in the time of *Ptolomeus Philadelphus*; only he contends with *Africanus* that it should be done in the 132 *Olympiad* which is in the 33 year of *Ptolomeus Philadelphus*, but *Eusebius* and *Jerom* place it in the very beginning of his reign, which I think is far more probable, and that in the time when *Ptolomeus Philadelphus* reigned with his Father *Ptolomeus Lagi*: for so it is most certain he did for two years before his Fathers death. By which means the great difficulty of *Scaliger* concerning *Demetrius Phalereus* is quite taken off; for *Hermippus* speaks nothing of *Demetrius* his being out of favour with *Philadelphus*, during his Fathers life, but that upon his fathers death, he was banished by him, and dyed in his banishment; so that *Demetrius* might have the oversight of the Library at *Alexandria* and be the

Seet. 8.

*Animad. ad
Num. Euseb.
1734.*

*V. Scaliger ib.
Theocrir. Scho.
ad Idyl. 17.
Juven. l. 16.
Euseb. chr. gr.*

main instrument of promoting this translation, and yet those things be after true which *Hermippus* speaks, viz. when *Ptolomæus Lagi* or *Soter* was now dead. For it stands not to reason that during his *Fathers* life *Philadelphus* should discover his displeasure against *Demetrius*, it being conceived upon the advice given to his *Father* for preferring the sons of *Arfinoe* to the *Crown* before the son of *Berenice*. Most likely therefore it is that this translation might be begun by the means of *Demetrius Phalerius* in the time of *Philadelphus* his reigning with his *Father*, but it may be not finished till after the death of *Soter* when *Philadelphus* reigned alone. And by this now we can perfectly reconcile that difference which is among the *Fathers* concerning the time when this translation was made. For *Irenæus* attributes it to the time of *Ptolomæus Lagi*. *Clemens Alexandrinus* questions whether in the time of *Lagi* or *Philadelphus*; the rest of the *Chorus* carry it for *Philadelphus*; but the words of *Anatolius* in *Eusebius* cast it fully for both; for there speaking of *Aristobulus*, he saith he was one of the *Seventy* who interpreted the *Scriptures* to *Ptolomæus Philadelphus* and his *Father*, and dedicated his *Commentaries* upon the *Law* to both those *Kings*. *Hæc sane omnem scrupulum eximunt*, saith *Vossius* upon producing this testimony, this puts it out of all doubt; and to the same purpose speaks the learned *Jesuite Petavins* in his notes on *Epiphanius*.

Having thus far cleared the time when the Translation of the *Scriptures* into *Greek* was made, we shall find our conjecture much strengthened, by comparing this with the age of the fore-mentioned *Historians*, *Manetho* and *Berosus*. *Manetho* we have already made appear to have lived in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, and that, saith *Vossius*, after the death of *Soter*. It is evident from what remains of him in *Eusebius* his *Chronica*, that he not only flourished in the time of *Philadelphus*, but writ his history at the special command of *Philadelphus*, as manifestly appears by the remaining *Epistle* of *Manetho* to him, still extant in *Eusebius*. This command of *Philadelphus* might very probably be occasioned upon the view of that account, which

Hist. Eccl. l. 7.
c. 26.

De Hist. Grec.
l. 1. cap. 12.
pag. 380.
Sect. 2.

Chr. Gr. p. 6.

the

the *Holy Scriptures*, being then translated into *Greek*, did give of the world, and the propagation of mankind; upon which, we cannot imagine but so inquisitive a person as *Philadelphus* was, would be very earnest to have his curiosity satisfied, as to what the *Egyptian Priests* (who had boasted so much of antiquity) could produce to confront with the *Scriptures*. Whereupon the task was undertaken by this *Manetho*, High Priest of *Heliopolis*, whereby those things which the *Egyptian Priests* had to that time kept secret in their *Cloysters*, were now divulged and exposed to the judgement of the learned world; but what satisfaction they were able to give inquisitive minds, as to the main *Στάμνον*, or matter enquired after, may partly appear by what hath been said of *Manetho* already, and by what shall be spoken of his *Dynasties* afterwards.

But all this will not persuade *Kircher*; for, whatever *Scaliger*, nay, what *Manetho* himself saith to the contrary, he, with the confidence and learning of a *Jesuite*, affirms, that this *Manetho* is elder than *Alexander the great*. For these are his words, *Frequens apud priscos historicos Dynasti- arum Egyptiacarum fit mentio, quarum tamen alium authorem non habemus nisi Manethonem Sebennytam, Sacerdotem Egyptum, quem ante tempora Alexandri, quicquid dicat Scaliger, in Egypto floruisse comperio*. Certainly some more than ordinary evidence may be expected after so confident an affirmation; but whatever that person be in other undertakings, he is as unhappy a person in *Philology*, as any that have pretended so much acquaintance with it. One would think, he that had been twenty years, as he tells us himself, courting the *Egyptian Mysteries* for compassing his *Oedipus*, should have found some better arguments to prove an assertion of this nature, than meerly the testimony of *Josephus*, the *Hebrew book Juchasin*, and some *Arabick Writers*, not one of all which do mention the thing they are brought for, viz. that *Manetho* was elder than *Alexander*. All the business is, they quote him as an ancient Writer; but what then? The Author of the *Book Juchasin* was *Abraham Zachuth* a Jew of *Salamancha*, who writ in the year of our Lord 1502. and this book was first

Oedip. Egypt.
To. I. Synag. I.
c. 9.

printed at Constantinople, 1556. Might not this man then well mention *Manetho* as an ancient Writer, if he flourished above 1600 years before him, in the time of *Ptolemaeus Philadelphus*? And what if some *Arabick* Writers mention him? are they of so great antiquity and credit themselves, that it is an evidence *Manetho* lived in *Alexanders* time to be praised by them? It would be well if *Kircher*, and other learned men, who think the world is grown to so great stupidity, as to believe every thing to be a Jewel which is far fetched, would first assert and vindicate the antiquity and fidelity of their *Arabick* Authors, such as *Gelaldinus*, *Abenephi*, and many others, before they expect we should part with our more authentick Records of History for those fabulous relations which they are so full fraught withal. Were it here any part of my present business, it were an easie matter so to lay open the ignorance, falsity, and fabulousness of those *Arabians* whom that Author relies so much upon, that he could not be freed from a design to impose upon the world, who makes use of their Testimony in matters of ancient times without a Caveat. I know none fit to believe these *Arabick* Writers as to these things, but those who have faith enough to concoct the *Rabbins* in matter of History. Of whom *Origen* saith, πάντα μὲν τὰ Ἰουδαίων τῶν νῦν μύθοι καὶ λῆγοι. Who are, as *Grotius* truly saith, pessimi historia Magistri; nam ex quo patria expulsi sunt, omnis apud illos historia crassis erroribus & fabulis est inquinata, quibus & proinde nihil credendum est, nisi aliunde testes accederunt. And as *Is. Casaubon* passeth this sharp, but due censure upon them. *Rabbini* ubi de Lingua Hebraica agitur & vocis alicujus proprietate, vel aliquo Talmudico instituto, merito à Christianis tribui non parum; ubi vero à verbis venit ad res, aut ad historiam, vel rerum antiquarum veteris populi explicationem, nisi falli & decipi volumus, nihil admodum esse illis fidei habendum. Sexcentis argumentis hoc facile probarem si id nunc agerem. And in reference to their ancient rites as well as history, *Joseph Scaliger* hath given this verdict of them. Manifesta est Judaeorum inscitia, qui cum usu veterum rituum, etiam eorum cognitionem amiserunt, & multa quae ad eorum sacra

C. Celsus l. 2.
Annot in Mat.
24. 24.

Exercit. ad Ba-
ron. 16. S. 8.

De Emend.
Temp. l. 6.

& *historiam pertinent, longe melius nos teneamus quam ipsi.* The same which these very learned persons say of *Rabbinical*, may with as much truth be said of these *Arabick* Writers, in matters of *ancient history*, which I have here inserted, to shew the reason why I have thought the *testimony* of either of these two sorts of persons so *inconsiderable* in the matter of our future discourse; which being *historical*, and that of the greatest *antiquity*, little relief is to be expected from either of them in order thereto. But to return to *Kircher*. It is freely granted that *Josephus*, an Author of *credit* and *age*, sufficient to give his opinion in this case, doth very frequently cite *Manetho* in his *Egyptian History*; particularly in his learned Books against *Apion*; but where he doth give the least intimation of *Manetho* being elder than *Alexander*, I am yet to seek. But *Kircher* will not yet leave the matter so, but undertakes to give an account of the mistake; which is, that there were two *Manetho's* besides, and both *Egyptians*, mentioned by *Suidas*; one a *Mendesian*, who writ of the Preparation of the *Egyptian* *ῥῶφι*, a kind of perfume used by the *Egyptian* Priests. The other a *Diospolitan*, who writ some *Physiological* and *Astronomical* Treatises, whose works he hears are preserved in the Duke of Florence his Library; and this was he (saith he) who lived in the times of *Augustus*, whom many by the equivocation of the name have confounded with the ancient Writer of the *Egyptian Dynasties*. Is it possible so learned a Jesuite should discover so little judgement in so few words? For first, who ever asserted the Writer of the *Dynasties* to have lived in the time of *Augustus*? Yet secondly, if that *Manetho* whom *Suidas* there speaks of, lived in *Augustus* his time, according to *Kircher*, then it must necessarily follow, that the Compiler of the *Dynasties* did: for it is evident to any one that looks into *Suidas*, that he there speaks of the same *Manetho*; for these are his words; *Μανέθας ἐν Διασπολίῳ τῆς Αἰγύπτου, ἢ Σεβέννυτος φυσιολογικῶς, &c.* Can any thing be more plain than that he here speaks of *Manetho Sebennytæ*, who was the Author of the *Dynasties*, though he might write other things besides, of which *Suidas* there speaks?

speaks? But *Kircher* very wisely, in translating *Suidas* his words, leaves out *Σεβερρύτης*, which decides the *converse*, and makes it clear that he speaks of the same *Manetho*, of whom we have been discoursing. Thus it still appears that this *Manetho* is no elder than the time of *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, which was the thing to be proved.

Sect. 10.

Now for *Berosus* although the *Chaldeans* had occasion enough given them before this time, to produce their antiquities by the *Jews* converse with them in *Babylon*; yet we find this Author the first who durst adventure them abroad, such as they were, in *Greek*. Now that this *Berosus* published his History after the time mentioned, I thus prove. *Tatianus Assyrius* tells us that he writ the *Chaldaick History* in three books, and dedicated them to *Antiochus*, τῷ μὲν Σέλευκον τεύω, as it is read in the fragment of *Tatianus* preserved in *Eusebius*; but it must be acknowledged that in the *Paris* edition of *Tatianus*, as well as the *Basil*, it is thus read, κατ' Ἀλέξανδρον γερονός, Ἀντόχῳ τῷ μὲν αὐτὸν τεύω, here it relates to the third from *Alexander*, in the other to the third from *Seleucus*; Now if we reckon the third so as to take the person from whom we reckon in, for the first, according to the reading in *Eusebius*, it falls to be *Antiochus* called θεός, according to the other reading it falls to be *Antiochus Soter*; for *Seleucus* succeeded *Alexander* in the Kingdom of *Syria*; *Antiochus Soter*, *Seleucus*; *Antiochus θεός* *Antiochus Soter*. But according to either of these readings, our purpose is sufficiently proved. For *Antiochus Soter* began to reign in *Syria* in the sixth year of *Ptol. Philadelphus* in *Egypt*; *Antiochus θεός* succeeded him in the 22 year of *Philadelphus*; now the soonest that the History of *Berosus* could come forth, must be in the reign of *Antiochus Soter*, which according to our accounts is some competent time after the translation of the Scripture into *Greek*; but if it were not till the time of *Antiochus θεός*, we cannot but imagine that the report of the account of ancient times in the Scriptures was sufficiently divulged before the publishing of this History of *Berosus*; and it may be *Berosus* might somewhat sooner than others understand all transactions at *Alexandria*,

Præp. Evang.
l. 10. p. 289.
ed. Rob. Steph.

V. Scaliger de
Emend. Temp.
l. 5. p. 392.

andria, because the place of his chief residence was where *Ptolomy Philadelphus* was born, which was in the *Isle of Co.* But *Vossius* goes another way to work, to prove the time of *Berosus*, which is this. He quotes it out of *Pliny* that *Berosus* recorded the History of 480. years, which, saith he, must be reckoned from the era of *Nabonasser*. Now this began in the second year of the 8 *Olympiad*, from which time if we reckon 480. years, it falls upon the latter end of *Antiochus Soter*; and so his History could not come out before the 22 of *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, or very little before. Thus we have made it evident, that these two great *Historians* are younger even than the translation of the *Bible* into *Greek*, by which it appears probable that they were provoked to publish their *fabulous Dynasties* to the world. And so much to shew the insufficiency of the *Chaldean History*, as to the account of ancient times: Which we shall conclude with the censure of *Strabo* a grave and judicious Author concerning the antiquities of the *Persians, Medes, and Syrians*, which, saith he, have not obtained any great credit in the world, διὰ τὴν ἰσχυρὰν ἀπλότητα καὶ φιλομουσίαν, because of the simplicity and fabulousness of their *Historians*. From hence we see then that there is no great credibility in those *Histories*, which are impeached of falshood by the most grave and judicious of *Heathen Writers*.

De hist. Græc.
l. 1. c. 13.
Plin. hist. nat.
l. 7. c. 56.

Geogr. l. 11.

CHAP. IV.

The defect of the Grecian History.

That manifested by three evident arguments of it. 1. The fabulouſness of the Poetical age of Greece. The Antiquity of Poetry. Of Orpheus and the antient Poets. Whence the Poetical Fables borrowed. The advancement of Poetry and Idolatry together in Greece. The different censures of Strabo and Eratosthenes concerning the Poetical age of Greece, and the reasons of them. 2. The eldest Historians of Greece are of suspected credit. Of Damastes, Aristeus and others ; of most of their eldest Historians we have nothing left but their names, of others only the subjects they treated of, and some fragments. 3. Those that are extant, either confess their ignorance of eldest times, or plainly discover it. Of the first sort are Thucydides and Plutarch ; several evidences of the Grecians Ignorance of the true original of Nations. Of Herodotus and his mistakes ; the Greeks ignorance in Geography discovered, and thence their insufficiency as to an account of ancient history.

Sect. 1.

DESCEND we now to the History of Greece ; to see whether the Metropolis of Arts and Learning can afford us any account of ancient times, that may be able to make us in the least question the account given of them in sacred Scriptures. We have already manifested the defect of Greece as to letters and ancient records, but yet it may be pretended that her Historians by the excellency of their wits and searching abroad into other Nations, might find a more certain account of ancient times, than other Nations could obtain. There is no body, who is any thing acquainted with the Grecian humour, but will say they were beholding to their wits for most of their Histories, they being some of the earliest Writers of Romances in the world, if all fabulous narrations may bear that name. But laying aside at present all their Poetick Mythology, as it concerns their gods, (which
we

we may have occasion to enquire into afterwards) we now examine only their *credibility*, where they pretend to be most *historical*. Yet how far they are from meriting belief even in these things, will appear to any that shall consider; First, That their most ancient writers were *Poetical* and apparently *fabulous*. Secondly, That their eldest *Historians* are of suspected credit even among themselves. Thirdly, That their best *Historians* either discover or confess abundance of ignorance as to the *History* of ancient times. First, That their first writers were *Poetical* and apparently *fabulous*: Strabo undertakes to prove that *Prose* is only an imitation of *Poetry*, and so *Poetry* must needs be first written. For, saith he, at first *Poetry* was only in request, afterwards in imitation of that, Cadmus, Pherecydes and Hecateus writ their *Histories*, observing all other laws of *Poetry*, but only the measures of it; but by degrees writers began to take greater liberty, and so brought it down from that lofty strain it was then in, to the form now in use: as the *Comical* strain is nothing else but a depressing the sublimer style of *Tragedies*. This he proves because ἀδύρ did anciently signify the same with ποίηεν; for *Poems* were only λόγοι μεμελισμένοι, *Lessons* fit to be sung among them; thence, saith he, is the original of the παρὰσσαι, &c. For these were those *Poems* which were sung ἐν παρὰσφ, when they held a branch of *Laurel* in their hands, as *Plutarch* tells us they were wont to do *Homer's Iliads*, others were sung to the *Harp*, as *Hesiod's ἔργα*: besides, saith Strabo, that *Prose* is called ὁ περὶ λόγος argues that it is only a bringing down of the higher strain in use before. But however this were in general, as to the *Grecians*, it is evident that *Poetry* was first in use among them; for in their elder times when they first began to creep out of *Barbarism*, all the *Philosophy* and instruction they had, was from their *Poets*, and was all couched in verse; which *Plutarch* not only confirms, but particularly instanceth in *Orpheus*, *Hesiod*, *Parmenides*, *Xenophanes*, *Empedocles* and *Thales*; and hence *Horace de arte Poetica* of the ancient *Poets* before *Homer*,

Geogr. l. i.

Sympos.

De P. th. Orac.

—fuit hac sapientia quondam
Publica privatis secernere, sacra profanis :

I

Concubitus

Concubitu prohibere vago : dare jura maritis :
Oppida moliri : leges incidere ligno.
Sic honor & nomen divinis vatibus atque
Carminibus venit.

Dissert. in Hof.
cap. 6.

From hence as *Heinsius* observes, the *Poets* were anciently called *Διδάσκαλοι*; and the ancient speeches of the *Philosophers* containing matters of morality, were called *ἄγωνα καὶ ἀδελφία*, of which many are mentioned in their lives by *Dio- genes Laertius*; in the same sense were *Carmina* anciently used among the *Latines* for precepts of morality, as in that collection of them, which goes under the name of *Cato*, (which some think to be an ancient piece, but with a false inscription, but *Boxhornius* thinks it to be of some *Christians* doing in the decay of the *Roman Empire*) *Si deus est animus, nobis ut carmina dicunt.* *Carmina*, saith *Heinsius*, i. e. dicta *Philosophorum*; causa est, quia dicta illa breviter, quibus sententias suas de Deo deque reliquis includebant, ἀδελφία dicebant, i. e. *Carmina*.

Quest. Rom.
c. 14.

Secl. 2.

Geogr. l. 1. p. 13

When Poetry came first into request among the *Grecians*, is somewhat uncertain; but this is plain and evident, that the intention of it was not meerly for instruction, but as *Strabo* expresseth it, *διμαρτυρεῖν καὶ σεμπνέειν τὰ πλῆθη*, the more gently to draw the people on to Idolatry. For as he saith, it is impossible to persuade women and the promiscuous multitude to religion by meer dry reason or Philosophy, ἀλλὰ δὲ καὶ διὰ δεισιδαιμονίας, ὥστε δ' ἐκ ἀνθρώπων μυθοποιίας καὶ τέχνης; but for this, saith he, there is need of superstition, and this cannot be advanced without some fables and wonders. For, saith he, the Thunderbolt, Shields, Tridents, Serpents, Spears attributed to the Gods, are meer fables, and so is all the ancient Theology; but the Governours of the Common-wealth made use of these things, the better to awe the silly multitude, and to bring them into better order. I cannot tell how far this might be their end, since these things were not brought in so much by the several *Magistrates*, as by the endeavour of particular men, who thought to raise up their own esteem among the vulgar by such things, and were employed by the great deceiver of the world as his grand instruments to advance Idolatry

in it. For which we are to consider, that although there were gross *Ignorance*, and consequently *Superstition* enough in *Greece* before the *Poetick age* of it, yet their *superstitious* and *Idolatrous* worship was not so *licked* and brought into *form*, as about the time of *Orpheus*, from whom the *Poetick age* commenceth: who was as great an *instrument* of setting up *Idolatry*, as *Apollonius* was afterwards of *restoring* it, being both *persons* of the highest *esteem* and *veneration* among the *heathen*. Much about the same time did those live in the world who were the first great promoters of *Superstition* and *Poetry*, as *Melampus*, *Musæus*, *Arion*, *Methymneus*, *Amphion* of *Thebes*, and *Eumolpus* *Thrax*, none of whom were very far distant from the time of *Orpheus*. Of whom *Clemens Alexandrinus* thus speaks, *περὶ ὧν ἡ μυσική ἐλυμνήσατο καὶ βίον ἐν τέχνῳ πρὸς ῥητορίαν*. — *Protreptic. p. 3.*
τὸς ἀνθρώπους ἐπὶ τὰ ἔιδαλα χειραγωγᾷσι πρῶτον. These under a pretence of *Musick* and *Poetry* corrupting the lives of men, did by a kind of artificial *Magick* draw them on to the practice of *Idolatry*. For the novelty and pleasingness of *Musick* and *Poetry* did presently insinuate its self into the minds of men, and thereby drew them to a *venerable esteem* both of the persons and practices of those who were the Authors of them. So *Conon* in *Photius* tells us that *Orpheus* was exceedingly acceptable to the people for his skill in *Musick*, which the *Thracians* and *Macedonians* were much delighted with: From which arose the *Fable* of his drawing trees and wild beasts after him, because his *Musick* had so great an influence upon the civilizing that people, who were almost grown rude through *Ignorance* and *Barbarism*: and so *Horace* explains it,

*Phot. Biblioth.
Cod. 186. sect.
45.*

*Sylvestres homines sacer, interpretisque Deorum,
Cædibus & victu sædo deterruit Orpheus,
Dictus ob hoc lenire Tigres rapidosque Leones.*

Ep. ad Pison.

This *Orpheus* by *Mythologists* is usually called the son of *Calliope*, but may with better reason be called the Father of the whole Chorus of the *Muses*, than the son of one of them, since *Pindar* calls him *πατὴρ ἀοιδῶν*, and *John Tzetzes* tells

Schol. in Hesiod. p. 8.

Paranef. 1.

Secl. 3.

Paus. Eliac. 2.

Diod. bibl. lib.

1. Euseb. Præp.

l. 10.

us he was called the son of Calliope, ὡς καλλιλογίας ποιητικῆς εὐρετής καὶ ὕμνων ἥ τις εἰς τὰ θεῶς, as the inventor of Poetical elegancy, and the sacred hymns which were made to the Gods. (Which the old Romans called *Assamenta*;) and Justin Martyr calls him ὁ πολυθεότητος πρῶτον διδάσκαλος, the first teacher of Polytheism and Idolatry.

For this Orpheus having been in Egypt, as Pausanias, Diodorus, and Artapanus in Eusebius all confess, he brought from thence most of the Magical rites and superstitious customs in use there, and set them up among the Grecians; so Diodorus acknowledgeth in the same place; and is likewise evident by what Aristophanes saith in his βάτραχοι.

At. 4 sc. 2.

Ὅρφευς μὲν γὰρ πελάτας ὁ ἡμῖν κατέδειξε.
Φόνον τ' ἀπέχεσθαι.

Orpheus first instructed them in the sacred mysteries, and to abstain from slaughter: which is to be understood of the βουδία, the killing of beasts in sacrifice, which probably was in use among them before as a remainder of ancient tradition, till Orpheus brought his Egyptian doctrine into request among them. The mysteries of Osiris, saith Diodorus, were transplanted into Greece under the name of Dionysus, or Bacchus, and Isis under Ceres or Magna Mater, and the punishment and pleasures after this life from the rites of sepulture among them; Charons wafting of souls from the lake Acherusia in Egypt, over which they were wont to send the dead bodies. Pausanias tells us that the Spartans derived the worship of Ceres Cthonia from Orpheus, and the Aginata the worship of Hecate. Besides which he instituted new rites and mysteries of his own, in which the initiated were called Ὀρφεωπελεσται; and required a most solemn oath from all of them never to divulge them, which was after observed in all those prophane mysteries which in imitation of these were set up among the Greeks. Strabo thinks the mysteries of Orpheus were in imitation of the old Ceryttian and Bendidian mysteries among the Thracians; but Herodotus with more probability parallels them and the

Dionysian

Lacon. p. 95.

Corinth. p. 72.

V. C. Rhod. Ant.

Lecl. l. 15. p. 9.

Geogr. l. 10.

Dionysian with the *Aegyptian*, from which we have already seen that *Orpheus* derived his; who is conceived by *Georgius Cedrenus* and *Timotheus* in *Eusebius*, to have lived about the time of *Gideon* the judge of *Israel*; but there is too great confusion concerning his age, to define any thing certainly about it. Which ariseth most from the several persons going under his name, of which besides this were in all probability two more; the one an *Heroick Poet*, called by *Suidas Ciconæus*, or *Arcas*, who lived two Ages before *Homer*, and he that goes under the name of *Orpheus*, whose *Hymns* are still extant, but are truly ascribed to *Onomacritus* the *Athenian*, by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tatianus Assyrius*, *Suidas*, and others, who flourished in the times of the *Pisistratide* at *Athens*. We are like then to have little relief for finding out of truth in the *Poetick Age* of *Greece*, when the main design of the *Learning* then used, was only to insinuate the belief of *Fables* into the people, and by that to awe them into *Idolatry*.

*Enterp. p. 134.
Ed. H. St.*

*V. Suidam in
Orphe.*

Sect. 4.

If we come lower down to the succeeding *Poets*, we may find *Fables* increasing still in the time of *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and the rest, which made *Eratoſthenes*, a person of great Judgement and Learning (whence he was called *alter Plato*, and *πένταθλος*, and *τὸ βῆτα*, because he carried, if not the first, yet the second place in all kind of Literature) condemn the ancient *Poetry* as *παλὰν μυθολογίαν*, a company of old *Wives Tales*, which were invented for nothing but to please silly people, and had no real learning or truth at all in them. For this though he be sharply censured by *Strabo* in his first Book, who undertakes to vindicate the *Geography* of *Homer* from the exceptions of *Eratoſthenes*; yet himself cannot but confess that there is a very great mixture of *Fables* in all their *Poets*, which is, saith he, partly to delight the people; and partly to awe them. For the minds of men being alwaies desirous of Novelties, such things do hugely please the natural humours of weak people; especially if there be something in them that is *σπουδαῖον ἢ τετραῖον*, very strange and wonderful, it increaseth the delight in hearing it; *ἥτις ἐστὶ τὸ μαυθάνειν φίλτερον*, which draws them on to a desire of hearing more of it. And

by this means, saith he, are Children first brought on to learning, and all ignorant persons are kept in awe; nay, and the more learned themselves (partly for want of reason and judgment, and partly from the remainder of those impressions which these things made upon them when they were Children) cannot shake off that former credulity which they had as to these things. By which discourse of Strabo, though intended wholly by him in vindication of Poetick Fables, it is plain and evident what great disservice hath been done to truth by them, by reason they had no other Records to preserve their ancient history but these fabulous Writers, and therefore supposing a mixture of truth and falsehood together, which Strabo contends for; yet what way should be taken to distinguish the true from the false, when they had no other certain Records? And besides, he himself acknowledgeth how hard a matter it is even for wise men to excuse those fabulous narrations out of their minds, which were insinuated into them by all the advantages which prejudice, custom, and education could work upon them. Granting then there may be some truth at the bottom of their fabulous narrations;

Odyss. 3.

Ὡς δ' ὅτε πρὸς χρυσὸν περὶ χυρῆς ἄρ' ὕψω ἀνιῇ,

Which may be gilded over with some pleasant tales, as himself compares it; yet how shall those come to know that it is only gilded, that never saw any pure metal, and did alwaies believe that it was what it seemed to be? had there been any κερταῖον, or touchstone to have differenced between the one and the other, there might have been some way for a separation of them; but there being none such, we must conclude, that the fabulous narrations of Poets instead of making Truth more pleasant by their fictions, have so adulterated it, that we cannot find any credibility at all in their narrations of elder times, where the truth of the story hath had no other way of conveyance but through their fictions.

Sett. 5.

But though Poets may be allowed their liberty for representing things to the greatest advantage to the palates of their Readers, yet we may justly expect, when men
pro-

profess to be *historical*, they should deliver us nothing but what upon strictest examination may prove undoubted truth. Yet even this were the *Greeks* far from; for *Strabo* himself confesseth of their eldest *Historians*, *Καὶ οἱ πρῶτοι ἱστοριοὶ καὶ φυσικοὶ μυθῶντες*, *their first Historians both of persons and things were fabulous.* *Diodorus* particularly instanceth in their eldest *Historians*, as *Cadmus Milesius*, *Hecateus*, and *Hellanicus*, and condemns them for fabulousness. *Strabo* condemns *Damastes Sigeensis* for vanity and falshood, and wonders at *Eratosthenes* for making use of him; yet this man is of great antiquity among them, and his testimony used by authors of good credit, as *Dionys. Halicarnassensis*, *Plutarch*, and others. Nay *Pliny* professeth to follow him, and so doth *Aristeas Proconnesius*, in his *Arimaspi*, which may render the credit of his History very suspicious, with whom it was a sufficient ground of credibility to any story, that he found it in some *Greek Authors*. *Strabo* reckons *Damastes* with *Euemerus Messenius* and *Antiphanes Bergius*; which latter was so noted a liar, that from him, as *Stephanus* tells us, *βεβηλῆναι* was used as a proverb for to speak never a word of truth. *Aristeas Proconnesius* lived in the time of *Cyrus*, and writ a History of the *Arimaspi*, in three Books, who seems to have been the *Sir John Mandevil* of *Greece*, from his *Stories* of the *Arimaspi*, with one eye in their foreheads, and their continual fighting with the *Gryphens* for Gold; yet the story was taken upon trust by *Herodotus*, *Pliny*, and many others, though the experience of all who have visited those *Northern Climats*, do sufficiently refute these follies. *Strabo* saith of this *Aristeas*, that he was *ἀντὶ γένος ἐν τῷ ἀλλοτρίῳ*, one inferior to none for juggling, which censure was probably occasioned by the common story of him, that he could let his soul out of his body when he pleased, and bring it again; yet this Juggler did *Celsus* pitch on to confront with our blessed *Saviour*, as *Hierocles* did on *Apollonius*; so much have those been to seek for reason, who have sought to oppose the doctrine of faith.

But further, what credit can we give to those *Historians* who have striven to confute each other, and lay open one.

Geogr. l. I.

*V. Casaub. in
Strab. l. I.
Voss. de hist.
Græc. l. 4. c. 5.*

*ἑστὶ πολλὸν
βεβηλῆναι.*

Geogr. l. 13.

Seft. 6.

one anothers falshood to the world. Where was there ever any such *dissonancy* in the sacred History of *Scripture*? doth the Writer of one Book discover the weakness of another? do not all the parts so exactly agree, that the most probable suspicion could ever fall into the heart of an *Infidel* is, that they were all written by the same person, which yet the *series* of times manifests to have been *impossible*. But now if we look into the ancient *Greek* Historians, we need no other testimony than themselves to take away their *credibility*. The *Genealogies* of *Hesiod* are corrected by *Acusilaus*; *Acusilaus* is condemned by *Hellanicus*, *Hellanicus* accused of falshood by *Ephorus*, *Ephorus* by *Timaeus*, *Timaeus* by such who followed him, as *Josephus* fully shews. Where must we then fix our belief? upon all in common? that is the ready way to believe *contradictions*: for they condemn one another of falshood. Must we believe one, and reject the rest? but what evidence doth that one give why he should be credited more than the rest? And which is a most irrefragable argument against the *Grecian History*, their *eldest Historians* are acknowledged to be the most *fabulous*; for our only recourse for deciding the controversies among the *younger Historians*, must be to the *elder*: And here we are further to seek than ever; for the first ages are *confessed* to be *Poetical*, and to have no certainty of *truth* in them. So that it is impossible to find out any undoubted certainty of ancient times among the *Greek Historians*; which will be yet more evident when we add this, that there are very few extant of those *Historians*, who did carry the greatest name for *Antiquity*.

Sect. 6.

The highest antiquity of the *Greek Historians* doth not much exceed the time of *Cyrus* and *Cambyses*, as *Vossius* hath fully demonstrated in his *learned Book*, *De Historicis Graecis*, and therefore I shall spare particular enquiries into their several ages. Only these two things will further clear the *insufficiency* of the *Greek History*, as to an account of ancient times: first, that of many of these old historians we have nothing left but their *meer names*, without any certainty of what they treated. Such are *Sisyphus* *Cons*, *Corinnus*, *Eugeon* *Samius*,

Samius, Deiochus Proconnesius, Eudemus Parius, Democles Phygæus, Analesagoras Chalcedonius, Xenomedes Chius, and severall others whose names are recorded by severall writers, and listed by *Vossius* among the *Historians*, but no evidence what subject of history was handled by them. Secondly, that of those whose not only memories are preserved, but some evidence of what they writ, we have nothing extant till the time of the Persian war. For all that was writ before, is now consumed by time, and swallowed up in that vast and all devouring Gulf; in which yet their heads still appear above the waters, to tell us what once they informed the world of. It cannot be denyed, but if many of those ancient histories were yet remaining, we might probably have some greater light into some matters of fact in the elder times of *Greece*, which now we are wholly to seek for, unless we think to quench our thirst in the muddy waters of some fabulous *Poets*. For what is now become of the antiquities of *Ionia* and the *City Miletus* written by *Cadmus Milesius*, supposed to be the first writer of History? where lie the *Genealogies* of *Acnsilaus Argivus*? where is now extant the *History* of the *Gods* written by *Pherecydes Scyrius* *Pythagoras* his Master? or the *Chronica* of *Archilochus* who flourished about the 20 *Olympiad*? or those of *Theagenes Rheginus*? Where may we hope to meet with *Pherecydes Lerius* his *Attick antiquities*, or his *Catalogue* of *Cities and Nations*? or *Hecateus* his description of *Asia*, and some suppose of *Libya* and *Europe* too? or the *Original* of *Nations* and *founders* of *Cities* written by *Hellanicus*? How may we come by the *Persick, Greek and Egyptian History* of *Charon Lampsacenus*, the *Lydian History* of *Xanthus Lydius*; the *Samian antiquities* of *Simmias Rhodius*; the *Corinthian History* of *Eumulus Corinthius*; *Panyasis* his *Antiquities* of *Greece*; the *Scythian History* of *Anacharsis*, the *Phrygian* of *Diagoras*; the *Chaldaick and Persian* of *Democritus*; the *Sicilian and Italian* of *Hippys Rheginus*; the *Telcheniack History* of *Teleclides*? All these are now buried with many more in the rubbish of time, and we have nothing but the meer skeletons of them left, to tell us that once such persons were, and thought themselves concerned

to give the world some account of their being in it. Whereby may be likewise seen the remarkable providence of God concerning the sacred history, which though of a far greater antiquity than any of these, hath survived them all, and is still preserved with as much purity and incorruption as a book passing through so many hands was capable of. But of that in its due place.

Sect. 8.

But yet if the *Greek historians* that are yet extant, were of more undoubted credit than those that are lost, we might easily bear with our losing some old stories, if we gained some authentick history by it accomplished in all its parts: but even this we are far from in the *Greek history*; for the *historians* themselves do either confess their own ignorance of ancient times, or do most palpably discover it, which was the third and last consideration touching the credibility of the *Grecian history*. That most grave and accurate historian *Thucydides*, than whom scarce ever any *Grecian* discovered more an impartial love to the truth in what he writ, doth not only confess, but largely prove the impossibility of an exact account to be given of the times preceding the *Peloponnesian war*, in the very entrance into his history: For, saith he; the matter preceding that time, cannot now through the length of time be accurately discovered or found out by us. All that he could find in the ancient state of *Greece* was a great deal of Confusion, unquiet stations, frequent removals, continual piracies, and no settled form of Commonwealth. What certain account can be then expected of those times, when a most judicious writer, even of *Athens* it self, acknowledgeth such a Chaos in their ancient history! And *Plutarch* a later Author indeed, but scarce behind any of them, if we believe *Taurus* in *A. Gellius* for learning and prudence, dares not we see venture any further back than the time of *Theseus*; for before that time, as he compares it, as *Geographers* in their maps when they have gone as far as they can, fill up the empty space with some unpassable mountains, or frozen seas, or devouring sands; so those who give an account of elder times are fain to insert *τεγάρων ἔργων*, some wonderful and Tragical stories, which (as he saith) have neither any truth nor certainty in them. Thus we see those who were best able to

judge

judge of the *Greek antiquities*, can find no sure footing to stand on in them; and what *basis* can we find for our *faith*, where they could find so little for their *knowledge*? And those who have been more daring and venturous than these persons mentioned, what a *Labyrinth* have they run themselves into, how many *confusions* and *contradictions* have they involved themselves in? sometimes writing the passages of other *Countries* for those of *Greece*, and at other times so confounding times, persons and places, that one might think they had only a design upon the understandings of their readers, to make them play at *Blind mans-buff* in searching for the *Kings of Greece*.

But as they are so *confused* in their own history, so they *Sect. 9.* are as *Ignorant* and *fabulous* when they dare venture over their own *thresholds* and look abroad into other *Countries*; we certainly owe a great part of the lamentable *ignorance* of the true *original* of most *Nations* to the pitiful account the *Greek Authors* have given of them; which have had the fortune to be entertained in the world with so much esteem and veneration, that it hath been thought *learning* enough to be acquainted with the account which they give of *Nations*. Which I doubt not hath been the great reason so many *fabulous relations* not only of *Nations* but *persons* and *several animals* never existing in the world, have met with so much entertainment from the less inquisitive world. The *Greek writers* it is evident, took up things upon *trust* as much as any people in the world did, being a very weak and inconsiderable Nation at first, and afterwards the knowledge they had was generally borrowed from other *Nations* which the wise men only suited to the temper of the *Greeks*, and so made it more *fabulous* than it was before. As it was certainly the great defect of the *natural philosophy* of the *Greeks*, (as it hath been ever since in the world) that they were so ready to form *Theories* upon some *principles* or *hypotheses* which they only received by *Tradition* from others, without fetching their *knowledge* from the *experiments* of *nature*; and to these they suited all the *phenomena* of *nature*; and what was not *suitable* was rejected as *monstrous* and *Anomalous*: so it was in their *history* wherein they had

some *fabulous hypotheses* they took for granted without enquiring into the *truth* and *certainity* of them, and to these they suit whatever light they gained in after times of the *state* of foreign *Nations*, which hath made *Truth* and *Antiquity* wrestle so much with the *corruptions* which eat into them through the *pride* and *ignorance* of the *Greeks*. Hence they have always suited the *History* of other *Nations* with the account they give of their own; and where nothing could serve out of their own *History* to give an account of the *original* of other *Nations*, they (who were never backward at *fictions*) have made a *founder* of them suitable to their own language. The truth is, there is nothing in the world useful or beneficial to mankind, but they have made shift to find the *Author* of it among themselves. If we enquire after the *original* of *agriculture*, we are told of *Ceres* and *Triptolemus*; if of *pasturage*, we are told of an *Arcadian Pan*; if of *wine*, we presently hear of a *Liber Pater*: if of *Iron instruments*, then who but *Vulcan*? if of *Musick*, none like to *Apollo*. If we press them then with the *History* of other *Nations*, they are as well provided here: if we enquire an account of *Europe*, *Asia* or *Libya*; for the *first* we are told a fine story of *Cadmus* his *sister*, for the *second* of *Prometheus* his *Mother* of that name, and for the *third* of a daughter of *Epaphus*. If we are yet so curious as to know the *original* of particular *Countries*; then *Italia* must find its name from a *Calf* of *Hercules*, because *ἰταλῶ* in *Greek* will signifie some such thing; *Sardinia* and *Africa* must be from *Sardos* and *Afer* two sons of *Hercules*; but yet if these will not serve, *Hercules* shall not want for children to people the world; for we hear of *Scythes*, *Galatas*, *Lydus*, some other sons of his, that gave names to *Scythia*, *Lydia*, *Galatia*; with the same probability that *Media* had its name from *Medea*, and *Spain* and *Lusitania* from *Pan* and *Lusus* two companions of *Bacchus*. If *Persia* want a founder, they have one *Perseus* an *Argive* ready for it; if *Syria*, *Babylonia* and *Arabia* want reasons of their names, the prodigal *Greeks* will give *Apollo* three sons, *Syrus*, *Babylon* and *Arabs* rather than they shall be *heretical Acephalists*. This vanity of theirs was *universal*, not confined to any place or

age, but as any Nation or people came into their knowledge, their *Gods* were not so decrepit, but they might *Father* one son more upon them, rather than any Nation should be *filia populi*, and want a *Father*. Only the grave *Athenians* thought scorn to have any *Father* assigned them; their only ambition was to be accounted *Aborigines & genuini terra*, to be the eldest sons of their *Teeming mother the earth*, and to have been born by the same equivocal generation that mice and frogs are from the impregnated slime of the earth. Are we not likely to have a wonderful account of ancient times from those who could arrogate to themselves so much knowledge from such slender and thin accounts of the originals of people which they gave, and would have the world to entertain with the greatest veneration upon their naked words? Have we not indeed great reason to hearken to those who did so frequently discover their affection to Fables, and manifest their ignorance when ever they venture upon the History of other Nations?

The truth is, *Herodotus* himself (whom *Tully* calls the *Father of History*, which title he deserves at least in regard of antiquity, being the eldest of the extant *Greek Historians*) hath stood in need of his *Compurgators*, who yet have not been able to acquit him of *fabulousness*, but have sought to make good his credit by *recrimination*, or by making it appear that *Herodotus* did not fully believe the stories he tells, but took them upon trust himself, and so delivers them to the world. Some impute it to the *ingenuity* of *Herodotus*, that he calls his books of History by the name of the *Muses*, on purpose to tell his Readers they must not look for meer *History* in him, but a mixture of such relations, which though not true, might yet please and entertain his readers. Though others think they were not so inscribed by himself, but the names were given to them by the *Greeks* from the admiration his History had among them. However this were, this we are certain, that *Herodotus* was not first suspected of falshood in these latter ages of the world, but even among the *Greeks* themselves there have been found some that would undertake to make good that charge against him. For so *Suidas* tells us of one *Harpocration* *Ælius*, who writ

SECT. 10.

a book on purpose to discover the fallshood of *Herodotus*, αὐτὸ τὸ κηλαφεῖν τὴν τὴν Ἡρόδοτον ἱστορίαν. *Plutarch* his Books are well known of the spight or malignity of *Herodotus*, but the occasion of that is sufficiently known likewise, because *Herodotus* had given no very favourable character of *Plutarchs Country*. *Strabo* likewise seems to accuse *Herodotus* much of nugacity and mixing prodigious fables with his History; but I confess observing the grounds on which *Plutarch* insists against *Herodotus*, I am very prone to think that the ground of the great pique in some of the Greek Writers against *Herodotus*, was, that he told too many tales out of School, and had discovered too much of the Infancy of Greece, and how much the Grecians borrowed of the Egyptian Superstitions: which *Plutarch* expressly speaks of, that *Herodotus* was too much led aside, καὶ Αἰγυπτίαν ἀλ-αζονείαις καὶ μυθολογίαις, τὰ σημειώματα καὶ ἀγνόματα τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἀνατρέπων. Although therefore *Herodotus* may not be much to blame in the things which the Grecians' most charge him with, yet those who favour him most cannot excuse his palpable mistakes in some things, and ignorance in others.

De Herod. Mal.
p. 857.

C. Appion. l. 1.
Canon. Isag. l. 3.

Josephus thinks he was deceived by the Egyptian Priests in things relating to the state of their affairs, of which *Jos. Scaliger* gives many accounts; either, saith he, the persons who gave him his intelligence were ignorant themselves; or else like true Egyptians, they were cunning enough, but imposed upon *Herodotus* being a stranger and unacquainted with their artifices; or else he did not understand his Interpreter, or was deceived by him; or lastly, *Herodotus* might have so much of a Grecian in him, as to adulterate the true History with some fables of his own; wherefore he rather adheres to *Manetho* than *Herodotus* as to the Egyptian History: who yet elsewhere (I will not say with what constancy to himself) vouchsafes him this high elogium, that he is *Scrinium originum Græcarum & Barbararum, auctor à doctis nunquam deponendus*.

Not. ad num.
Euseb. 1572.

Seet. II.

Hist. l. 2. c. 4.

It cannot be denied but a great deal of very useful History may be fetched out of him; yet who can excuse his Ignorance, when he not only denies there is an Ocean compassing the Land, but condemns the Geographers for asserting

ing it? Unless this might be any plea for his *ignorance in Geography*, that he had so many great names after him guilty of the same: Witness *Aristotles suspicion* that the *Indies* should be joyned to *Europe* about the *Straights*, where they feigned *Hercules* his *pillars* to be. And the *Thereans ignorance* where any such place as *Libya* was, when the *Oracle* bid them plant a *Colony* there. Would it not have been worth ones while to have heard the great noise the *Sun* used to make every night when he doused his head in the *Ocean*, as none of the most ignorant *Greeks* imagined? And to have seen the *Sun* about *Hercules* his *pillars* to be a hundred times bigger than he appeared to them, as they commonly fancied. Was not *Alexander*, think we, well intored in *Cosmography* by his Master *Aristotle*, when he writ word to his Mother he had found out the head of *Nilus* in the *East-Indies*? as *Arrian* relates the story. No wonder then his souldiers should mistake the *Mountain Paropamisus* in the *Indies*, for *Caucasus* near *Colchis*, when even their learned men thought *Colchis* the utmost boundary of the world on that side, as *Hercules* his *pillars* on this. What a lamentable account then were they able to give of the most ancient times, who were so ignorant of the state of the world in their own time, when *Learning* was in its height in *Greece*, and frequent discoveries daily made of the world, by the wars which were made abroad! *Eratosthenes* confesseth the *Grecians* were ignorant of a great part of *Asia*, and the *Northern parts of Europe* before *Alexanders* expedition; and *Strabo* confesseth as much of the *Western parts of Europe* till the *Roman expeditions* thither. *Palus Maotis* and *Colchis*, saith he, were not fully known till the time of *Mithridates*, nor *Hycania*, *Bactriana*, and *Scythia*, till the *Parthian wars*. *Eratosthenes* mentions some who thought the *Arabian Sea* to be only a *Lake*; and it further argues their ignorance in *Geography*, that the later *Geographers* always correct the errours of the elder, as *Ptolomy* doth *Marinus*, *Eratosthenes* those before him, *Hipparchus* *Eratosthenes*, and *Strabo* not only both them, but *Eudoxus*, *Ephorus*, *Dicaearchus*, *Polybius*, *Posidonius*, and almost all that had writ before him. I insist on these things, not that I would destroy the

Hist. Alexand.
l. 6.

Geogr. l. 1.

the *credibility* of any *humane history*, where the Authors are guilty of any mistakes (for that were to take away the credit of all *humane History*) but to shew how *insufficient* those *Histories* are to give us a certain account of the *original* of *Nations*, who were so unacquainted with the state of those *Nations* which they pretended to give an account of. For where there is wanting *divine revelation* (which was not pretended by any *Greek Historians*, and if it had, had been easily refuted) there must be supposed a full and exact knowledge of all things pertaining to that which they pretend to give an account of; and if they discover *apparent defect* and *insufficiency* (which hath been largely manifested as to them, in the precedent discourse) we have ground to deny the *credibility* of those *Histories* upon the account of such defect and insufficiency. So much then will abundantly suffice for the making good the first argument against the *credibility* of *prophane histories*, as to the account which they give of ancient times, different from the *Word of God*.

CHAP. V.

The general uncertainty of Heathen Chronology.

The want of credibility in Heathen History further proved from the uncertainty and confusion in their accounts of ancient times; that discovered by the uncertain form of their years. An enquiry into the different forms of the Egyptian years, the first of thirty days, the second of four Months; of both instances given in the Egyptian history. Of the Chaldean accounts, and the first Dynasties mentioned by Berosus, how they may be reduced to probability. Of the Egyptian Dynasties. Of Manetho. Reasons of accounting them fabulous, because not attested by any credible authority, and rejected by the best Historians. The opinion of Scaliger and Vossius, concerning their being cotemporary, propounded and rejected with reasons against it. Of the ancient division of Egypt into Nomi or Provinces, and the number of them against Vossius and Kircher.

THe next thing to manifest how little there is of credibility in the account of ancient times, reported by the histories of heathen Nations, is, the uncertainty, confusion and ambiguity in the account which they give of those times. If we suppose them not at all defective as to their records, if yet we find the account given so perplexed, ambiguous and confused, that we can find no certainty at all of the meaning of it, we have very little reason to entertain it with any certain assent unto it. Now this will be made evident by these things. 1. The uncertainty of their Chronology, whereon their whole account depends. 2. The multitude of impostures taken for ancient histories. 3. The uncertain meaning of those characters wherein their ancient histories were preserved. I begin with the great uncertainty of the Heathen Chronology, which will be manifested by two things; First, The uncertain form of their years: Secondly, The want or uncertainty of their *μεγέθυματα*, or certain fixed Epochs from which to derive their

their account of ancient times. First, the uncertain form of their years; this of its self is sufficient to destroy the credibility of their accounts of antiquity, if it be manifested that they had different forms of years in use among them; and it be uncertain to which to refer their accounts they give; for if years be sometimes Lunar, sometimes Solar, and sometimes but of thirty days, sometimes of four Months, sometimes of three hundred and sixty days, sometimes three hundred sixty five, sometimes four times three hundred sixty five in their tetraeteris, sometimes eight times in their octaeteris, sometimes more, what certainty can we possibly have which of them to fix their accounts to? Especially when they only give them in general, and never tell us which of them they mean, which may make it shrewdly suspicious that their intent is only to impose on our understandings, and not to deal fairly and truly with us. We shall therefore so much explain the different form of their years, as thereby to shew what uncertainties we are left to by them: Where we meddle not with their Tropical and Astronomical years, but chiefly those which were in civil use among the several Nations we speak to. A year is nothing else but a System of days, and is therefore capable of as great variety, as days are in being joyned together; but usually there were some other lesser Systems of days than those which are called years, out of which the other doth result. Such is the *ἑπταήμερον*, or the week, which as Joseph Scaliger saith, was *res omnibus Orientis populis ab ultima usque antiquitate usitata*; a thing in continual use among the Eastern Nations, though it be but of late reception into the parts of Europe, and no elder than Christianity among them. Among the Romans was used an *ἑκτοήμερον*, which was for the sake of the Nundine returning every ninth day. The Mexicans as Scaliger tells us, reckon all by a *τρίσκαίδεκάήμερον*, a System of thirteen days. Next to these were their Months, which were either Lunar or Solar. The Lunar were either from the Moons return to the same point of the Zodiack again, called *πενήνθες ἡμέραι*, which was less than twenty eight dayes; but this was of no use in civil computations; or else from one conjunction of the Moon with the Sun to another, which was,

De Emendat.
Temp. l. i.

was called σῦνοδος σελλω'ης; or else from the first *phasīs* of the *Moon*, the second day after its *coitus*, called φάσις and ἀπό-
κρησις σελλω'ης; some, as the *Grecians* reckoned their *Lunar*
months from the *coitus*, as *Scaliger* proves out of *Vitru-*
vius; others from the *phasīs*, as some *Eastern Nations* did;
as the *Jews* began their observation of the *New Moons*,
from the first *phasīs* or appearance of her after the *Coitus*.
The *Solar months* were either *natural*, such as were defined
by the *Sun's* passage from one sign of the *Zodiack* to ano-
ther; or *civil*, whereby the *months* were equally divided
into 30. days apiece, as in the *Grecian* and *Egyptian*
year.

Having thus far seen of what the year consists, we now
proceed to shew that the ancient Nations did not observe
one constant certain form of a year among them, but had
several in use, to which their accounts may be referred.
And because the *Egyptians* are supposed to have been best
skilled as to the form of the year, according to that of
Macrobius, *Anni certus modus apud solos semper Egyptios*
fuit: We shall particularly demonstrate the variety of
years in use among them; By which we shall see what great
uncertainty there is in their accounts of their *Dynasties*.
For first it is evident that the time of 30. days was among
the ancient *Egyptians* accounted a year, for which we
have the testimony of *Plutarch* in *Numa*. Ἀγυπτίοις ὁ με-
νιαῖος ὁ ἐνιαυτὸς εἴ τε τετράμηνος; The *Egyptians* at first
had a year consisting of one month, and after of four: And this
if we believe *Alexander ab Alexandro*, was the year most
frequently in use among them. So *Varro* in *Lactantius* gives
an account of the great age of some men in ancient times,
who are supposed to have lived 1000. years; *Ait enim apud*
Ægyptios pro annis menses haberi, ut non Solis per 12. signa
circuitus faciat annum, sed Luna quæ orbem illum signife-
rum 30 dierum spatio illustrat. It is then evident that this
year of thirty days was in use among the *Egyptians*; the
only scruple is whether it was used in their *sacred accounts*
or no; and that it was, we have a pregnant testimony in
Plutarch, in the fore-cited place; speaking of the *Egypti-*
ans great pretence to antiquity, he gives this account of it;

Seet. 2.

Saturn. l. i. c.

12.

Gen. Dier. l. 2.

c. 23.

De Orig. error.

l. 2. c. 12.

πλὴθος ἀμήχανον ἐπὶ ταῖς ἡμερολογίαις καταφέρειν, ἅτε δὴ τὰς μῆνας εἰς ἐτῶν ἀειμὸν πθέμενοι. They reckon an infinite number of years in their accounts, because they reckon their months instead of years.

According to this computation, it will be no difficult matter to reduce the vast accounts of the *Egyptian antiquity* to some proportion, and to reconcile their exorbitant *Dynasties* with sobriety and truth, especially as to the account given of them by *Diodorus Siculus*; for so *Diodorus* gives in their accounts, that the *Gods* and *Heroes* reigned in *Egypt* for the space of near 18000 years, and the last of them was *Orus* the Son of *Isis*: From the reign of men in *Egypt* he reckons about 9500 years to the time (if we admit of *Jacob Capellus* his correction of πεντακισίαν for πενταχιλίαν in *Diodorus*) with his entrance into *Egypt*, which was in the 180 *Olympiad*: Now as the foresaid learned Author observes, *Diodorus* came into *Egypt* A. M. 3940. V. C. 694. the mortal men then had reigned in *Egypt* 9500 years, which taking it for these *Lunar years* of 30 dayes, makes of *Julian years* 780. the *Heroes* and *Gods* 18000. months, that is of *Julian years* 1478; from these two summs together are gathered 2258 years, which being deducted from the year of the world 3940 falls in the year of the world 1682. about which time *Misraim*, who was the great historical *Osiris* of *Egypt* (so called by a light variation of his former name) might be well supposed to be born; for that was in the year of *Noah* 630. and so *Orus* might be born, who was the Son of *Osiris*, about the year of the world 1778: Between whose time and *Alexander* the great his Conquest of *Egypt*, the *Egyptians*, as the same *Diodorus* tells us, reckon little less than 23000 years: Now according to this computation, of 30. days for a year, we may reconcile this to truth too; for from 1778 to 3667 of the world, which falls upon the 417 year of *Nabonassar*, there is an Intervall of 1889 years, which makes of these *Lunar years* of 30 days, saith *Capellus*, 22996 and 15 days, which comes very near, if not altogether, up to the *Egyptian Computation*: So when the *Egyptians* according to *Diodorus*, make no less than 10000 years distance

Biblioth. l. 1.

Hist. sacr. &
Exot. A. M.
1682.

stance between their *Hercules* and *Hercules Baotius*, the Son of *Alcmena*, it must be understood of these *Lunar years*; for granting what the *Egyptians* say, that *Hercules Baotius* lived but one generation before the *Trojan war*, and so his time to fall out about 2783. reckoning now backward from thence, and deducting from that year of the world 10000. months of 30. daies, or *Julian years* 831. and 130. daies, the time of the *Egyptian Hercules* will fall about the year of the world 1962. about which time we may well suppose him to live or die. And according to this computation we are to understand what the *Egyptians* told *Herodotus*, that from their first King or Priests of *Vulcan*, till the time of *Sethoes* (in whose time *Sennacherib* attempted the Conquest of *Egypt*) there had been passed 341. Generations, and as many Kings and High-Priests, and 11340. years, reckoning three Generations to make up a Century. But now, if we understand this prodigious computation according to this form of years, we may suspect the *Egyptians* of an intention to deceive *Herodotus* and the credulous *Greeks*, but yet not impeach them of direct falshood, it being thus reconcilable to truth. For according to this account 100. years makes 3000. daies, and a Generation 1000. so many daies the Kings or Priests of *Vulcan* may be allowed to reign; so 340. Generations of 1000. daies apiece, make up 340000. daies, to which if we add the 200. daies which *Sethos* had now reigned upon *Sennacherib's* invasion, we have 340200. daies, which makes up of these years of 30. daies apiece 11340. which is the number assigned by *Herodotus*. *Jasobus Capellus* thinks the *Epocha* from whence these years are to be reckoned, is from *A. M.* 12350. when *Mephres* began to reign in *Egypt*, from whence if we number these 340200. daies, or 11340. monthly years, which makes up of *Julian years* 931, and 152. daies, the number falls *A. M.* 3282. about which time in probability *Sennacherib* invaded *Egypt*. Thus we see by making use of those *Lunar years*, that it is possible to reconcile some of the *Egyptian* extravagant accounts to some probability and consistency with truth; but however we owe very little thanks

Hist. sacr. & Exotic. p. 158.

to the *Egyptians* for it , who deliver these things in gross , without telling us which years they mean , and thereby evidence their intent to deceive all who have so little wit as to be deceived by them.

Sett. 3.

L. I.

Polyhist. c. 3.
De Civit. Dei,
l. 12. c. 10.

L. I. Biblioth.

De Idolat. l. 1.
c. 28.

The next kind and form of the *Egyptian year* , was that which consisted of four equal *Months* , amounting to 120. days ; the use of this kind of year among them is attested by *Plutarch* in the fore-cited place , and by *Diodorus* , who gives an account of this kind of year among the *Egyptians*. *Solinus* seems to mention this as the only year in request among the *Egyptians* : and so *S. Austin*. *Perhibentur Egyptii quondam tam breves annos habuisse ut quaternis mensibus finerintur*. This renders then the *Egyptians* accounts yet more uncertain , and only leaves us to guess with the greatest probability of reason what form of year was meant by them in their *Computations*. So when *Diodorus* speaks so much in favour of the old *Egyptian Kings* and *Laws* , and produceth this from the *Egyptian Priests* , as the best evidence of the excellent temper of their Government , that they had *Kings* of their own Nation for the space of 4700. years , till the time of *Cambyses* his inroad into *Egypt* , which was in the third year of the 63 *Olympiad*. Now besides the apparent contradiction of these accounts to the other already explained, if we take them in gross , as the *Egyptians* give them , it is evident this can be no otherwise true , than by taking these accounts in that form of years now mentioned by us. For these 4700. years , taking them for 120. days apiece , make up of *Julian years* 1544. which being deducted from the year of the world 3475. which was the time when *Cambyses* invaded *Egypt* , the remainder is *A.M.* 1931. about which time we may fix the death of *Orus* , from whom their proper *Kings* commenced. And of these years *Vossius* tells us we are to understand what they report of the long lives of their ancient *Kings* , when they attribute to each of them the space of 300. years , as when they attribute a 1000. and more to their eldest *Kings* , we are to understand them of simple *Lunar years* of 30 days , by which these *Gigantick* measures of the term of their lives , may without the help of

of *Procrustes* be cut short according to the proportion of mens ordinary age in those eldest times. So when *Diodorus* reckons from the death of *Proteus* to his own time *A.M.* 3940. 3400 years, it must be understood of these years of four equal months; for so those 3400. years make up of *Julian* years 1117. which being deduced from 3940. the remainder is 2823. about which year of the world *Proteus* may be supposed to live, which was about the time of the *Judges* in *Israel*.

Neither was this only the *Egyptians* way, but in probability the ancient *Chaldeans* observed the same, which may be a ground likewise of those unmeasurable accounts among them in their first *Dynasties*, as is evident in the fragments of *Abydenus* and *Apollodorus* out of *Berosus*, where the times of their first *Kings* are reckoned not by years but $\Sigma\delta\epsilon\gamma\tau$, $\text{Nē}\epsilon\gamma\tau$, and $\Sigma\omega\sigma\tau$; now according to them every $\Sigma\delta\epsilon\gamma\tau$ contained 3600. years, $\text{Nē}\epsilon\gamma\tau$ 600. $\Sigma\omega\sigma\tau$ 60. Now who can imagine that *Alorus* and the ten *Kings* from him to *Xisuthrus* should reign 120. *Sari* as their computation is, which reckoning for every *Saros* 3600. years, makes up 432000. years? A very fair sum for the *Chaldean Dynasties* before the time of *Xisuthrus*, by whom in probability *Noah* was by them understood. There have been only two ways thought on of dealing with these computations; either rejecting them as wholly *fabulous*, and founded on no evidence or records of History, as we have seen already; only they might retain (being so near the place of the settlement of *Noah* and his posterity after the flood) the memory not only of the flood (of which it is evident they had several remainders preserved in their traditions) but likewise of the ages of men preceeding the flood, wherein they were right, reckoning from *Alorus* the first to *Xisuthrus*, i.e. from *Adam* to *Noah* ten *Generations*; but as to the names of those ten persons, and the times they lived in, being wholly ignorant through the unfaithfulness of tradition, they took their liberty not only of coining names, but of setting what age to them they pleased themselves. And to this purpose *Scaliger* observes that some of their first *Kings* are reckoned before the flood, which saith he, is denied by *Georgius Syn-*
cellus.

Seet, 4.

Not. in Gr. Euseb. p. 406.

cellus without any shew of reason. Thus far then we may admit of the *Chaldeans Dynasties* as to some part of the tradition, but rejecting their names and computations as fabulous. The other way of explaining these *Dynasties*, is by the several wayes of computation among them; For the learned *Monks*, *Panodorus*, and *Anianus*, understand those vast summs, not of years, but daies, and so make a *Saros* to contain 120. months of 30. daies apiece, which saith *Scaliger*, make ten *Chaldee years*, and a *Nirus* 20 equal months, and a *Sofos* two: according to which computation, the 100. *Sari* make but 1200. years. But this computation of theirs is rejected by *Georgius Syncellus*, because he supposeth *Eusebius* so well versed in these things, that he would never have set them down for years, if the *Chaldeans* had not understood them so, and therefore he would not trouble himself in reducing *Fables* to true *History*, as he expresseth it, whose words are at large produced by *Scaliger* in the fore-cited place; and it will appear more necessary to reject those *Chaldee Computations*, if we take the *summs* of their years in the sense which *Salmasius* gives of them in the Preface to his Book *De annis Climactericis* (from whom *Dyrenius* the Author of the *Præadamites* hath borrowed most of his arguments as to these things.) According to him then, every $\Sigma\delta\epsilon\Theta$ contained no less than 6000. years, as the *Toman* among the *Persians* contained 10000. but because that learned man hath only given us his *reperi Scriptum*, without any certain foundation for so large an account of those *summs*, we shall take them in as favourable a sense as we can. In order to which a very learned man of our own hath found a third interpretation of the $\Sigma\delta\epsilon\Theta$ in the *Chaldee accounts*, from a correction of *Suidas* by the *M. S.* in the *Vatican Library*, according to which he thus reads the words. Οἱ ὃν πρὸς αἰετι ποιεῖν ἐνιαυτὸς βονβ' καὶ ἡ Χαλδαίων ψήφου, ἅπτερ ὁ αἰετι ποιεῖ μῆνας Σεληνιακῶν σκβ' οἷσι γίνονται. ἐνιαυτοὶ καὶ μῆνες ἕξ, and so the sense, saith he, is clear, $\Sigma\delta\epsilon\Theta$ according to the *Chaldee account* comprehends 222. Months, which come to eighteen years and six months; therefore 120. αἰετι make 2220. years, and therefore (he adds) for βονβ' I read, leaving out the last β, βον'. Now according to this sense

D. Pearson on
the Creed.
p. 115. l. edit.

sense of 120 *Sari* to comprehend the *summ* of 2220 year; it will be no difficult matter to reduce the *fragment* of *Berosus* concerning the ten *Kings* before the flood reigning 120 *Sari*, to some degree of probability: As to which I shall only suppose these two things. *First*, that the ancient *Chaldeans* had preserved among them some tradition of the number of the chief persons before the flood; for we find them exactly agreeing with the *Scriptures* as to the number, though differing as to the names of them, which may be seen in the fragments of *Africanus* preserved in *Eusebius* his *Greek Chronica*. *Secondly*, that *Berosus* from whom *Apollodorus* and *Alexander Polyhistor* deliver these computations, might as to the account of the times of those persons follow the translation of the *Septuagint*. For I have already made it evident that *Berosus* did not publish his *History* till after the *Septuagint* was abroad; now according to the computation of the *Septuagint* of the ages before the flood, these 120 *Sari* of the ten *Kings* will not much disagree from it. For these make 2220 years of these ten persons, and the *Septuagint* in all make 2242 so that if instead of βακβ in *Suidas*, we only read it βαμβ we have the exact computation of the *Septuagint* in these 120 *Sari*; but of this let the learned judge.

Pag. 5.

We now come to the *Egyptian Dynasties* of *Manetho*, as to which I doubt we must be fain to take the same course that *Eusebius* did with the *Chaldean*, μὴ σπουδὴ βιάζεσθαι τὸ τεύχεον τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, not to trouble our selves overmuch in seeking to reconcile Fables to truth. Great pains is taken by some very learned men to reduce the disorderly *Dynasties* of *Manetho* to some probable account; but I must confess upon an impartial examination of them, that I think they have striven if not to make an *Ethiopian* white, yet an *Egyptian* to speak truth concerning his own Country, which are almost of an equal impossibility. *Joseph Scaliger* who first in this latter age of the world produced them into the light out of *Georgius Syncellus*, hath a more favourable opinion of them, than of the *Egyptian History* of *Herodotus*, *Diodorus* and others, but upon what account I cannot imagine. Is it because four *Dynasties* according to his own computation exceed the

Seet. 5.

creation of the world according to the true account? for which he is fain to make use of his *Tempus prolepticum* and *Julian period*, which reacheth 764 years beyond the age of the world, and was invented by him from the multiplication of the great *Cycle* into the *indiction*, i. e. of 532 into 15. Or is it because forsooth *Manetho* hath digested all into better order and reckoned up the several *Dynasties* which lay confused in other authors? but this only shews him a more cunning impostor who saw the former accounts given by others would not serve the turn, and therefore pretends to more exactness and diligence, that he might more easily deceive the readers. But setting aside those things which have been said already concerning *Manetho*, I have these things which make me reject his *Dynasties* as *fabulous*: first, the vast difference between *Manetho* his accounts and all others who have written the *Egyptian History* in the order and names of his *Dynasties*. Where do we ever read of the several *Dynasties* of the *Thinites*, *Memphites*, *Soites*, *Diospolitans* and many others but in himself? It is very strange that neither *Herodotus*, nor *Eratosthenes*, nor *Diodorus*, who have all written a succession of the *Egyptian Kings*, should neither by their own industry, nor by all the interest they had in *Egypt*, get any knowledge of these methodically digested *Dynasties*. Besides, had there been any historical certainty in these *Dynasties* of *Manetho*, whence comes it to pass that they should be so silently passed over by those who were *Egyptian Priests* themselves and undertook to write the History of *Egypt*? Such were *Charemon* who was an *isegorgaureus* a sacred Scribe, and *Ptolomæus Mendesium* who was an *Egyptian Priest*, as *Eusebius* tells us, and comprehended the history of *Egypt* in three books. Now had this History been so authentical as is pretended, whence come so many and great contradictions between them, in so much that *Josephus* saith, If that which they report were true, it were impossible they should so much differ; but they labour in the invention of lyes, and write neither agreeably to the truth nor to one another. So that it is next to a miracle almost to see how prodigiously fond of these *Dynasties* *Kircher* is, and what pains he hath taken to no purpose about.

about them ; *scio multos esse*, saith he, *qui hujusmodi Dynastias meras nugas & commenta putant* ; very true ; but why is not he of the same mind too ? he confesseth himself to have been so once ; but since he hath conversed more with the *Oriental traditions*, he hath found them not to be so fabulous as many make them. It seems then the *Basis* of the *Egyptian Dynasties* as well before the flood as after, must lie in this *Oriental tradition* ; a thing, which some, to shew their great skill in those Eastern languages, are grown very fond of. But as far as I can yet see, they sail to *Ophir* not for gold, but *Peacocks* ; and the next *Legend* the world hath should be called *Legenda Orientalis*. For can any thing be more irrational, absurd and fabulous, than those *Arabick traditions* which that author scrapes as much for, as *Æsops Cock* did on the *Dunghil* ? but there is no jewel to be found among them : Unless we should take those 15 hard names of men for such which by the *Arabick writers* are said to have succeeded each other in *Egypt* before the flood, viz. *Nacraus*, *Nathras*, *Mesram*, *Henoah*, *Arjak*, *Haslim*, *Husal*, *Tatrasan*, *Sarkak*, *Schaluk*, *Surith*, (who they say built the *Pyramids*) *Hugith*, *Manaus*, *Aphrus*, *Malinus*, *Abn Ama Pharaun*, in whose time they say the flood came. But should we be so little befriended by reason as to grant all this, what advantage will this be to *Manetho* who speaks not of *Kings* but whole *Dynasties* ? so that it still appears these *Dynasties* are fabulous not being attested by any credible witnesses. Secondly, All those who profess to follow *Manetho*, differ strangely from one another, as *Josephus*, *Africanus*, *Eusebius*, *George the Syncellus* of the patriarch *Tarasius* ; and *Scaliger* who hath taken so much pains in digesting of them, yet he is condemned by others since ; and *Isaac Vossius* gives a particular caution to his reader, *In his Dynastiis compingendis nequaquam esse sequendum ordinem & calculum Scaligeri*. What should be the reason of this diversity, but that they thought them not so *authentick*, but they might cut off, alter and transpose as they saw occasion ? which is most plain and evident in *Eusebius*, who makes no difficulty of cutting off one whole *Dynasty*, and dividing another into two, only to reconcile the distance between

Oedip. Egi. Th.
1. Sym. 1. c. 9.

De etat. Mun-
di, cap. 10.

Thuois the Egyptian King, and *Tentamus* the Assyrian Emperor, and the destruction of Troy, and therefore leaves out 4 Assyrian Kings and a whole Dynasty of the Egyptians to make a *Synchronism* between those three.

Sett. 6.

But yet there hath been something very fairly offered to the world to clear the truth, if not *Manetho*, in order to his Dynasties, viz. that the subtle Egyptian to inhance the antiquity of his own Country, did take *implicite* years for *solid*, and place those in a *succession* which were *cotemporary* one with another; This indeed is a very compendious way to advance a great summ of years with a very little charge: Wherein he hath done, saith *Capellus*, as if a Spaniard in the Indies should glory of the antiquity of the Dynasties of Spain, and should attribute to the Earls of *Barcinona* 337 years, to the King of *Arragon* 498, to the King of *Portugal* 418, to the King of *Leo* 545, of *Castile* 800 years, and yet all these Dynasties rise from the year of our Lord 717 when the *Saracens* first entred Spain. There are very few Nations, but will go near to vie antiquity with the Egyptians, if they may thus be allowed to reckon successively all those petty royalties which anciently were in most Nations; as might be particularly instanced in most great Empires, that they gradually rise from the subduing and incorporating of those petty royalties into which the several Nations were cantonized before. And there seems to be very strong ground of suspicion that some such thing was designed by *Manetho*, from the 32 Dynasty which is of the *Diospolitan Thebans*; for this Dynasty is said to begin from the tenth year of the 15 Dynasty of the *Phenician Pastours* in the time of *Saites*; now, which is most observable, he that begins this Dynasty, is of the very same name with him who begins the very first Dynasty of *Manetho*, who is *Menes*, and so likewise his son *Atrothis* is the same in both: Which hath made many think because *Menes* is reckoned first, not only in both these, but in *Diodorus*, *Eratosthenes* and others, that this *Menes* was he who first began the Kingdom of Egypt, after whose times it was divided into several Dynasties. Which makes *Scaliger* say, *illa vetustissima regna fuerunt instar latrociniorum, ubi vis non lex aut successio aut suffragia populi*

Hist. Sacr. &
exot. A. M.
33c8.

canon. sag. l. 3,

populi reges in folio regni collocabant. This opinion of the co-existence of these *Dynasties* is much embraced by *Vossius* both *Father* and *Son*, and by the *Father* made use of to justify *Scaliger* from *calumniators*, who made as though *Scaliger* did in effect overthrow the authority of the *Scriptures* by mentioning with some applause the *Dynasties* of *Manetho*.

Gerard. Voss.
Idol. l. 1. c. 28.
Is. Voss. de æt.
Mundi. c. 10.

But to this opinion how plausible soever it seems, I offer these exceptions. First, As to that *Menes* who is supposed to be the first founder of the *Egyptian Kingdom*, after whose death it is supposed that *Egypt* was divided into all these *Dynasties*; I demand therefore who this *Menes* was; was he the same with him whom the *Scripture* calls *Misraim* who was the first Planter of *Egypt*? this is not probable, for in all probability his name must be sought among the *Gods* and not the *mortals* that reigned. If we suppose him to be any other after him, it will be hard giving an account how he came to have the whole power of *Egypt* in his hands, and so soon after him it should be divided. For *Kingdoms* are oft-times made up of those *petty royalties* before; but it will be very hard finding instances of one persons enjoying the whole power, and so many *Dynasties* to arise after his decease, and to continue co-existent in peace and full power so long as these several *Dynasties* are supposed to do. Besides, is it not very strange that no *Historian* should mention such a former distribution of several principalities so anciently in *Egypt*? but that which to me utterly overthrows the co-existence of these *Dynasties* in *Egypt*, is, by comparing with them what we find in *Scripture* of greatest antiquity concerning the *Kingdom* of *Egypt*; which I cannot but wonder that none of these learned men should take notice of. When the *Egyptian Kingdom* was first founded, is not here a place to enquire; but it is evident that in *Abrahams* time, there was a *Pharaoh King* of *Egypt* (whom Archbishop *Usher* thinks to have been *Apophis*) not *Abimelech* the first *King* of *Egypt*, as *Constantinus Manasses* reports in his *Annals* (by a ridiculous mistake of the *King* of *Gerar* for the *King* of *Egypt*.) This *Pharaoh* was then certainly *King* of all the *Land* of *Egypt*, which still in *Scripture*

Señ. 7.

Gen. 12.

ture is called the *Land of Misraim* from the first planter of it : and this was of very great antiquity ; and therefore *Funccius* (though improbably) thinks this *Pharaoh* to have been *Osiris*, and *Rivet* thinks *Misraim* might have been alive till that time ; here then we find no *Dynasties co existing* ; but one *Kingdom* under one *King*. If we descend somewhat lower, to the times of *Jacob* and *Joseph*, the evidence is so undoubted of *Egypt* being an entire *Kingdom* under one *King*, that he may have just cause to suspect the eyes either of his body or his mind that distrusts it. For what more evident than that *Pharaoh* who preferred *Joseph* was *King of all the Land of Egypt* ? Were not the seven years of famine over all the *Land of Egypt* ? *Gen. 41. 55.* Was not *Joseph* set by *Pharaoh* over all the *Land of Egypt* ? *Gen. 41. 41, 43, 45.* And did not *Joseph* go over all the *Land of Egypt* to gather corn ? *Gen. 41. 46.* Nay did he not buy all the *Land of Egypt* for *Pharaoh* ? *Gen. 47. 20.* Can there possibly be given any fuller evidence of an entire *Kingdom*, than these are that *Egypt* was such then ? Afterwards we read of one *King* after another in *Egypt* for the space of nigh two hundred years, during the children of *Israel* slavery in *Egypt* ; and was not he, think we, *King* over all *Egypt*, in whose time the children of *Israel* went out thence And in all the following history of Scripture, is there not mention made of *Egypt* still as an entire *Kingdom*, and of one *King* over it ? Where then is there any place for these co-temporary *Dynasties* in *Egypt* ? No where that I know of, but in the fancies of some learned men.

Indeed there is one place that seems to give some countenance to this opinion ; but it is in far later times than the first *Dynasties* of *Manetho* are supposed to be in, which is in *Isai. 19. 2.* Where God saith, he would set the *Egyptians* against the *Egyptians*, and they shall fight every one against his brother, City against City, and *Kingdom* against *Kingdom*. Where it seems that there were several *Kingdoms* then existent among the *Egyptians* ; but the *Septuagint* very well renders it *πολεμοὶ ἐν πολεμῶν*. Now *πολεμοὶ* among the *Egyptians*, as *Epiphanius* and others tells us, notes *τῶν ἐκείνης πόλεως περικίβδη ἥτοι πείλωρον*, the precincts of every great City, such

as our Counties are, and therefore Pliny renders *vouoi* by *præfectura*; these were the several Provinces of Egypt, of which there were thirty six in Egypt, ten in Thebais, ten in Delta, the other sixteen in the midland parts; so that by Kingdom against Kingdom, no more is meant than one Province being set against another. Isaac Vossius thinks the number of the ancient *Nomi* was twelve, and that over every one of these was a peculiar King; and that this number may be gathered from the Dynasties of Manetho, setting aside the Dynasties of the Persians, Ethiopians, and Phœnicians: viz. the Thinites, Memphites, Elephantines, Heracleopolitans, Diospolitans Thebans, the lesser Diospolitans, Xoites, Tanites, Bubastites, Saïtes, Mendesiens, and Sebenytes: and so that Egypt was anciently a Dodecharchy, as England in the Saxons times was a Heptarchy. But as it already appears, there could be anciently no such Dodecharchy in Egypt; so it is likewise evident that this distribution of Egypt into *Nomi* is a later thing, and by most Writers is attributed to Sesoosis or Sesostris, whom Josephus supposeth to be Sésac King of Egypt, co-temporary with Rehoboam. Indeed if we believe Gelaldinus the Arabick Historian cited by Kircher, the most ancient distribution of Egypt was into four parts. Misraim held one part to himself, and gave his son Copt another, Esmun a third, and Atrib a fourth part; which division the same Author affirms to have continued till the time of Joseph, who made a new distribution of the whole Land. After him Sesostris divided the whole into thirty several *Nomi*; so Kircher will needs have it, that of the three several parts of Egypt, each might have for some mystical signification its ten *Nomi*, of which every one had its distinct and peculiar God it worshipped, and a particular Palace in the Labyrinth, and a peculiar Sanhedrin or Court of Justice belonging to it. But it evidently appears by that vain-glorious Oedipus, that it is a far easier matter to make new mysteries, than to interpret old ones, which as it might be easily discovered in the main foundations whereon that structure stands, so we have some evidence of it in our first entrance into it, in this part of Chorography of Egypt. For from whence had he this exact division of Egypt into thirty

*Vid. Boch.
Geogr. p. I. l. 4.
c. 4. Oedip.
Ægypt. To. I.
Syntag. l. c. 4.*

Syntag. I. c. 2.
p. 7.

Geogr. I. 17.

thirty nomi, ten of which belonged to the upper *Egypt*, or *Thebais*, ten to *Delta* or the lower *Egypt*, and the ten remaining to the *midland Country*? Hath he this from *Ptolomy*, whose *Scheme* of the several *Nomi* he publisheth? No, *Ptolomy* and *Pliny* by his own confession afterwards add many other to these, as *Omphile*, *Phanturites*, *Tanites*, *Phatnites*, *Neut*, *Heptanomos*, &c. Hath he it from *Strabo* whose authority he cites for it? No such matter. For *Strabo* saith expressly that *Thebais* had ten *Nomi*, *Delta* ten, and the *Midland* sixteen; only some are of opinion, saith he, that there were as many *Nomi* as *Palaces* in the *Labyrinth*, which were toward thirty; but yet the number is uncertain still. We see by this how ominous it is for an *Oedipus* to stumble at the threshold, and how easie a matter it is to interpret mysteries, if we may have the making of them. We see then no evidence at all for these co-temporary *Dynasties* of *Manetho*; which yet if we should grant, would be a further argument of the uncertainty of *Heathen Chronology*, when among them *implicite* years are given out to the world for solid; so that which way soever *Manetho* his *Dynasties* be taken, they will prove the thing in hand, whether we suppose them at least most part fabulous, or should grant he had taken those in succession to each other, which were co-existent with one another.

CHAP. VI.

The uncertain Epochs of Heathen Chronology.

An account given of the defect of Chronology in the eldest times. Of the Solar year among the Egyptians, the original of the Epicks, the antiquity of Intercalation among them. Of the several Canicular years; the difference between Scaliger and Petavius considered. The certain Epochs of the Egyptian history no elder than Nabonasser. Of the Grecian accounts. The fabulousness of the Heroical age of Greece. Of the ancient Grecian Kingdoms. The beginning of the Olympiads. The uncertain Origins of the Western Nations. Of the Latine Dynasties. The different Palilia of Rome. The uncertain reckoning Ab U. C. Of impostures as to ancient histories. Of Annii, Inghiramius, and others. Of the characters used by Heathen Priests. No sacred characters among the Jews. The partiality and inconsistency of Heathen histories with each other. From all which the want of credibility in them as to an account of ancient times is clearly demonstrated.

THE next thing to evidence the uncertainty of the *Heathen Chronology*, is, the want of certain *parapegmata*, or *some fixed periods of time*, according to which the account of times must be made. For if there be no certain Epochs by which to reckon the succession of ages, the distance of intervals, and all intervening accidents, we must of necessity fluctuate in continual uncertainties, and have no sure foundation to bottom any account of ancient times upon. The great reason of this defect, is the little care which those who lived in the eldest times had to preserve the memory of any ancient tradition among themselves, or to convey it to posterity in such a way as might be least lyable to imposture. Of all kinds of Learning, Chronology was the most rude in eldest times; and yet that is well called by Scaliger, *The life and soul of History*, without which, History is but a confused

fused lump, a meer *Mola*, an indigested piece of flesh, without life or form. The ancient accounts of the world were merely from year to year, and that with abundance of obscurity, uncertainty and variety: sometimes going by the course of the *Moon*, and therein they were as mutable as the *Moon* herself, how to conform the year regularly to her motion; and it was yet greater difficulty to regulate it by the course of the *Sun*, and to make the accounts of the *Sun* and *Moon* meet. There was so much perplexity and confusion about the ordering of a single year, and so long in most Nations before they could bring it into any order, that we are not to expect any fixed periods by which to find out the succession of ages among them. Among the *Egyptians* who are supposed most skilful in the account of the year, it was a long time before they found out any certain course of it. It is agreed by most, that when the *Egyptian Priests* had found out the form of the year by the course of the *Sun*, (which is attributed by *Diodorus* to the *Heliopolitan Priests*) yet the year in common use was only of 360 days, which in any great period of years must needs cause a monstrous confusion, by reason that their Months must of necessity by degrees change their place, so that in the great *Canicular year* of 730 *Thoyth*, which was the beginning of the *Summer Solstice* in the entrance into that period, would be removed into the midst of *Winter*, from whence arose that *Egyptian Fable* in *Herodotus*, that in the time of their eldest Kings, the *Sun* had twice changed his rising and setting; which was only caused by the variation of their Months, and not by any alteration in the course of the *Sun*. Which defect the *Egyptian Priests* at last observing, saw a necessity of adding five days to the end of the year, which thence were called *ἐπαγόμεναι*, which implies they were not anciently in use among them, being afterwards added to make up the course of the year. Which the *Egyptians* give an account of, as *Plutarch* tells us, under this Fable: *Mercury* being once at *Dice* with the *Moon*, he got from her the $\frac{72}{72}$ part of the year, which he afterwards added to the 360 days which were anciently the days of the year, which they called *ἐπαγόμεναι*, and therein celebrated the Festivals of their gods, thence the names.

Le I. c. 50.

Euterpe. Vide
Scatiger de E-
mend. Temp. l. 3.
p. 195.

De Iside &
Osiri.

names of the several ἐπαρήμεναι were taken from the *Gods*, the first was called Ὀσίρις, it being celebrated in honour of him; the second Ἀνουθίς, by which *Scaliger* understands *Anubis*, but *Vossius* more probably the *Senior Orus*; the third to Τυφώ, the fourth to Ἰσίς, the fifth to Νεφθίς the wife of Τυφώ, and sister to Ἰσίς. This course of the year *Scaliger* thinks that the *Egyptians* represented by the Serpent called Νεϋϋ, being described in a round circle biting some part of his tail in his mouth, whereby, saith he, they would have it understood, that the form of the year was not perfect without that adjection of five days to the end of the year: For to this day, saith he, the *Copties* and ancient *Egyptians* call the end of the year νεϋϋ. It seems that afterwards they understood likewise the necessity of intercalation of a day every fourth year for the sake of the redundant quadrant each year above 365 days; which course of four years they called their *Canicular year*, because they observed its defect in that time one whole day from the rising of the *Dog-star*: and besides that they called it ἡλιακὸν ἔτος and ἔτος θεῶ, & *lustrum Sothiacum*, from Σῶθις the *Dog-star*: but *Censorinus* denies any use of intercalation among the *Egyptians* in their civil year, although their *Sacred* and *Hieroglyphical* years might admit of it. And upon this ground, I suppose the controversie between those two learned persons *Scaliger* and *Petavius* concerning the antiquity of *Intercalation* among the *Egyptians* may be reconciled. For on the one side it is apparent, that the ordinary or civil year did want intercalation, by this testimony of *Censorinus*; Eorum annus civilis solos habet dies 365 sine ullo intercalari; itaq; quadriennium apud eos uno circiter die minus est quam naturale quadriennium; and thence, saith he, it comes to pass, that in 1461 years which was the great *Heliacal* year, it returns to the same beginning; for then the *Dog-star* ariseth again upon the first day of the month *Thoyth*, as it did at the beginning of this great *Canicular* year; and that this kind of civil year did continue among them in the time of *Censorinus* (which was of the *Dionysian* account 238) appears by this, that he saith in the year wherein he wrote his book, the *New-moon* of *Thoyth* was

*De Idol. l. x.
c. 28.*

*De die Natali
c. 18.*

*V. Petav. de
doctr. temp. l. 3.
c. 2.*

Kircher. Oedip.
Egypt. Tom. 3.
Class. 7. cap. 2.

Biblioth. l. i.
c. 49.

De sphaera cap.
6.

Bibl. l. i. cap.
50
Geog. l. 17.

Hieroglyph. l. i.
c. 5.

before the seventh day of the *Calends* of *July*, whereas 100 years before, it was before the 12 of the *Calends* of *August*; whence it is evident, that the *Julian year*, what ever some learned men pretend to the contrary, was not in ordinary use amongst the *Egyptians* in that time; and that *Sossigenes* when he corrected the *Roman account*, and brought in the form of the *Julian year*, did not take his pattern from the *Egyptian year*, but from the *Grecians* of *Alexandria*, who did make use of the *quadrant* added to the 365 years, which the *Egyptians* did not, as appears further by the *Golden circle* in the monument of *Osymanduas* (which *Diodorus* speaks of out of *Hecataeus Milesius*) which was of 365 cubits compass, and divided into so many segments for every day with the observations of the rising and setting of the several stars, and the effects portended by them. And the reason why this year continued in civil use among the *Egyptians*, is well assigned by *Geminus*, that the *Egyptians* according to a superstitious observation they had, would needs have their *Festivals* run through every day in the year. But now on the other side, it is as evident that by continual observation the wisest of the *Egyptian Priests*, did discern the necessity of *intercalation*, and that there wanted six hours in every year to make it *Compleat*, which every four years would make the *intercalation* of a day necessary; so much by *Diodorus* is affirmed of the *Theban Priests*, who were the best *Astronomers*, and by *Strabo* both of the *Theban* and *Heliopolitan*; and so likewise *Horapollo*, whose work was to interpret the more abstruse *Learning* of the *Egyptian Priests*: When, (saith he) the *Egyptians* would express a year, they name a *quadrant*, because from one rising of the star Sothis to another, the fourth part of a day is added, so that the year consists of 365 days (and a quadrant must be added, because of the antecedents and consequents) therefore every fourth year they reckon a *supernumerary day*. How unjustly *Petavius* hath charged *Scaliger* with falshood in reference to this testimony of *Horapollo*, meerly because the citation did not appear in that chapter mentioned by *Scaliger* in the book which *Petavius* used, hath been already observed by learned men; whereupon *Vossius* condemns

Petavius.

Petavius of strange *incogitancy*, because in three *Editions* mentioned by him, *Scaligers* citation was right; but *Conringius* hath since pleaded in behalf of *Petavius*, that he might make *use* of the Edition of *Causinus* distinct from the other three; whereby we see how small a *matter* will beget a *feud* between learned men, especially where *prejudice* hath lodged before, as is too evident in *Petavius* his rough dealing on all occasions with that very deserving person *Joseph Scaliger*. But to return, from hence by degrees the *Egyptians* proceeded to make greater *periods* of years (as *Endoxus* carried his *octaeteris* into *Greece* from the *Canicular* year of the *Egyptians*) they framed from this a greater *Canicular* year, which had as many years as a *Julian* hath daies; and lastly, the greatest *Canicular* year which comprehended four of the greater, and consisted of a period of 1461. years. But thus we see, that the great *periods* of years among them rise gradually, as they grow more skilful in the understanding the *nature* of the year; and that they had anciently no certain *periods* to govern themselves by in their *computation* of ancient times. Nay the *Egyptians* have not, as appears, any certain *Epocha* to go by elder than the *Egyptian* years of *Nabonassar*, and afterwards from the death of *Alexander*, and *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, and *Augustus* his victory at *Actium*.

*De Idol. l. 1.
c. 28. De Her-
met. med. c. 12.*

If from the *Egyptians* we remove our discourse unto the *Grecians*, we are still plunged into greater uncertainties, it being acknowledged by themselves that they had no certain succession of time before the *Olympiads*. To which purpose the Testimony of *Varro* in *Censorinus* is generally taken notice of, distributing time into three parts, reckoning two of them to be *unknown* and *fabulous*, and the *historical* part of time to begin with the first *Olympiad*. Indeed *Scaliger* and some others are loth to reject all that second part of time as *fabulous*, which was in the intervall between *Deucalions* flood and the *Olympiads*; and therefore they had rather call it *Heroical*, though much corrupted with *Fables*, and to think that it was *historical* as to *Persons*, but *fabulous* as to the actions of those *Persons*. But granting this, yet we are wholly to seek for any certain account of

Sect. 2.

*Not. in Can.
Isagog. l. 3.*

the succession of time and persons, for want of some certain *Epocha's*, which like the *Pole-star* should guide us in our passage through that boundless *Ocean* of the *Grecian History*. It must be confessed that some of the learned *Heathens* have taken a great deal of pains this way to find out some certain *periods* to fix on in the time before the *Olympiads*, as *Philochorus*, *Apollodorus*, and *Dionysius Halicarnassensis*, and others, who out of their skill in *Astronomy* sought to bring down some certain intervals between the destruction of *Troy*, and the first *Olympick* game of *Pelops*, restored by *Hercules* and *Atreus*. But granting that their *Epocha's* were fixed and certain, that the destruction of *Troy* was upon the 23 of *Thargelion*, the 11 month of the *Attick* account, and that the *Olympick* game fell out answerable to the ninth of our *July*, and these things were evidently proved from *Astronomical Observations*; yet how vast an account of time is lost quite beyond the siege of *Troy*! And besides that, as to all other accidents in the *Intervals* between these two *Epocha's* which could not be proved by *Celestial Observations* concurrent with them, they were left at a very great uncertainty still; only they might guess whether they approached nearer to one *Epocha* than the other by the *series* of *Families* and their *Generations* (three of which made a *Century* of years) whereby they might come to some conjectures, but could never arrive at any certainty at all.

Sett. 3.

But that which is most to our purpose is, that all the *History* of the *Original* of *Greece*, the foundations of their several *Kingdoms*, the succession of their first *Kings*, and all that comes under the name of the *History* of their ancient times, is clearly given over by their own most skilful *Chronologers*, as matters out of the reach of any clear evidence. Thence come such great differences concerning the antiquity of their ancient *Kingdoms*; the *Argolick* *Kingdom* by *Dionysius Halicarnass.* is supposed to be the eldest, and the *Attick* younger than it by 40 *Generations*, which according to their computation comes to a 1000. years, which is impossible; and yet the *Arcadians*, who gave themselves out to be elder than the *Moon*, are supposed

fed to be younger by him than the *Grashoppers* of *Athens* by nine *Generations*; and the *Phthiotica* under *Dencalion*, younger than the *Arcadica* by 42 *Generations*, which *Scaliger* might well say were *impossible* and *inconsistent*. The *Sicyonian* Kingdom is by most supposed to be of greatest antiquity among the *Grecians*, from which *Varro* began his history, as *S. Austin* tells us; and yet as to this, *Pausanias* only reckons the names of some *Kings* there, without any succession of time among them; and yet as to those names, *Africanus* (and *Eusebius* from him) dissent from *Pausanias*; and which is most observable, *Homer* reckons *Adrastus*, who is the 23 in the account of *Africanus*, to be the first, that reigned in *Sicyon*, whose time was after the institution of the *Olympick* game by *Pelops*: of him thus *Homer*,

De Civit. Dei,
l. 16. c. 2.

Καὶ Σικυῶν ἔθαρ Ἀδρήν τε πρῶτ' ἐμβασίλευεν.

Il. 3.

Whereby he expresseth *Adrastus* to be the first *King* of *Sicyon*; and not as *Scaliger* would interpret it, that *Adrastus* was first *King* of the *Sicyonians*, before he was of the *Argives*; for in the time of *Adrastus* at *Sicyon*, either *Atreus* or *Thyestes* was *King* of the *Argives*; for in the second year of *Phæstus* and *Adrastus* his supposed Predecessor in *Sicyon*, *Atreus* restored the *Olympick* game of *Pelops*, in the 41 year of their reign, and they reigned at *Argi* 65 years; Now that *Phæstus* at *Sicyon* is supposed to reign but eight years; and therefore the reign of *Adrastus* at *Sicyon* falls in with that of *Atreus* and *Thyestes* at *Argi* or *Mycena*. Thus we see now how uncertain the account of times was before the beginning of the *Olympiads* among the *Grecians*, which is fully acknowledged by *Diodorus*, and the very reason given which we here insist on, διὰ τὸ μὴ εἶναι παρὰ πηγάμιν παρειληθέναι τῶν τέτων πιστευόμενον, that there was no certainty in the ancient *Grecian* history, because they had no certain term (which he calls *parapegma*, as others *Epocha*, and *Censorinus titulus*) from whence to deduce their accounts. But now from the time of the *Olympiads* (i. e. from the first of them after their restoration by *Iphitus*, wherein the names of the Conquerors were engraven in *brass* tablets for the purpose) the suc-

De emend. temp.
l. 15.

succession of time is most certain and historical among the *Grecians*; by which account we have from thence a certain way of commensurating the sacred and prophane history. All the difficulty is in what year of sacred history the *Olympiads* began, which *Scaliger* thus finds out. *Censorinus* writes (in the year of Christ 238. which was of the *Julian period* 4951.) that that year was from the first *Olympiad* of *Iphitus* 1014. the first *Olympiad* was of the *Julian period* 3938. which was according to our learned *Primate A. M.* 3228. and the 35 of *Uzziah King of Judah*, or the 34. as *Capellus* thinks: So that from henceforward we have a clear account of time, which we have demonstrated to have been so uncertain before.

Sett. 4.

If we come from the *Greeks* further into these *European* parts, we shall find as much darkness and obscurity as to ancient times, if not more, than in those already discoursed of. For the truth is, the account of times before the *Romans* in *Italy*, *Germany*, old *Gallia* or *Britain*, are scarce fit to be discoursed of under any head than that of impostures. Not that I think those Nations had lain in a perpetual sleep till the *Romans* waked them into some kind of civility, but that they had no certain way of conveying down the transactions of their own and former times to the view of posterity. On which account we may justly reject all those pretended successions of Kings here in *Britain*, from *Gomer* and *Brute* as fabulous: And it will be the less wonder it should be so in those then accounted barbarous Nations, when even among those who were the Planters of knowledge and civility among others, the account of their ancient times is so dark, confused, and uncertain: As it would sufficiently appear to any that would take the pains to examine the succession of the two first *Dynasties* among the *Latines*; the first before *Aeneas* his coming into *Italy*, and the second of the *Aeneadae* after; and certainly it will be sufficient ground to question the account of times before, if in the third *Dynasty*, when the succession seems so clear, and so certain an *Epocha* as the building of *Rome*, to deduce their accounts from, their *Chronology* be uncertain, which I shall briefly speak to. For although *Porcius Cato* have

have in *Dionysius* the honour of finding out the first *Palilia* of the City of *Rome* (which was the Feast observed to the honour of the Goddess *Pales*, in the time of which, the foundations of *Rome* were laid) yet there appears no great certainty in his undertaking; for therein he was after contradicted by the learned *Roman Varro*. *Dionysius* tells us that *Cato* found by the *Censors tables* the exact time from the expulsion of the Kings, to the time of the Cities being taken by the *Gauls*; from which time to his own, he could not miss of it from the *Fasti consulares*, so that it cannot be denied but that *Cato* might have a certain account of times from the *Regifugium* to the time he writ his *Origines*. But what certainty *Cato* could have from the first *Palilia* of the City to the expulsion of *Tarquin*, we cannot understand. For the succession of *Kings* must needs be very uncertain, unless it be demonstrated from some publick monuments, or certain records, or some publick actions certainly known to have fallen out precisely in such a year of their several Reigns. Now none of these do occur in the *Roman History* in all that Interval from the *Palilia* to the *Regifugium*; so that not only the whole interval, but the time of every particular *Kings* Reign, are very uncertain. And therefore *Varro* being destitute of any demonstration of that time, had recourse to *L. Tarrutius Firmanus*, to see if by his skill in *Astronomy* he could certainly find out the first *Palilia* of *Rome*: His answer was, that he found that the City was built in the time of an *Eclipse* of the *Sun*, which was in the third year of the sixth *Olympiad*, according to which account *Varro* proceeded, and thence arose the difference between the *Palilia Catoniana* and *Varroniana*; the latter falling out in the 23. of *Iphitus*, the other in the 24. But if we believe *Joseph Scaliger*, there could not be an *Eclipse* of the *Sun* at the time affirmed by *Tarrutius*: But yet granting an *Eclipse* of the *Sun* then, what certainty can we have of the succession of the several *Kings* afterwards, without which there can be no certain computation *ab Urbe condita*? If then the *Romans*, who had so great advantage of knowing times, and were withal so inquisitive concerning the building of their City (which was a thing of

V. de Emend.
t. m. p. 5. p. 388

no very remote distance) could attain to no absolute certainty without it, what certainty can we expect as to an account of far ancienter times, either from them or others, when they had no *Censors tables*, nor *Fasti consulares* to be guided by? And thus much may serve to shew the great uncertainty of *Heathen Chronology*, as to the giving an account of ancient times.

Sect. 5.

And yet were it only an uncertainty as to *Chronology*, we might better bear with it; for the mistake meerly in computation of times were not so dangerous (any further than the credibility of the history depends on the computation, as in point of antiquity) if we were but certain that the persons and actions related of them were such as they are reported to be. But that which adds much to the confusion and uncertainty of *Heathen history*, is, the frequency of *Impostures*, which are more hard to be discovered, in that there are no authentick histories of those times extant, which hath both given occasion to variety of impostures, and much hindred their discovery. For the curiosity of men leading them back into a search after ancient times, it makes them exceeding credulous in embracing what ever pretends to give them any conduct through those dark and obscure paths of ancient history: And the World hath never been wanting of such as would be ready to abuse the simple credulity of well-meaning, but less wary men; but those ages have been most *feracious* in the production of such persons, which have pretended to more Learning than they had. The pretence of Learning made such persons appear, and the want of it made them not be discovered. Thus it was not only of old among the *Chaldeans* and *Agyptian Priests*, and the *Grecian Poets* and *Historians*, of whom we have spoken already; but even among those who might have learned more truth from the *Religion* they professed, than to think it stood in need of their lies. For there can be no greater disparagement offered to truth, than to defend it with any thing but it self, nothing laying truth so open to suspicion, as when falshood comes to be its *advocate*: And a false testimony discovered, doth more prejudice to a good cause, than it could any ways
ad.

advantage it, were it not discovered; and therefore their labours have been as serviceable to the world who have discovered *Impostures*, as those who have directly maintained truth against its open opposers, those being so much more dangerous, in that they appear in the disguise of truth, and therefore are with more difficulty discovered. Such a one was that *ignis fatuus* that appeared in a kind of twilight in the *Christian* world between the former darkness of *Barbarism*, and the approaching light of *knowledge*; I mean *Annius Viterbiensis*, who like *Hannibal* in passing the *Alps*, not finding a way ready to his mind, sets himself to burning the woods, and firing the rocks, and dissolving them with vinegar to make a passage through them: So *Annius* being beset in those *snowy* and *gray-headed Alps* of ancient history, and finding no way clear for him according to his fancy, he labours to *burn down* all certain *Records*, to eat through the credit of undoubted *Authors*, to make a more free passage for his own history, which he deduceth suitably to *Scripture* from the concurrent testimony of the eldest *Historians*. To which purpose, a new *Berosus*, *Manetho*, *Philo*, *Metasthenes* (as he mistook for *Megasthenes*) and *Xenophon* must put on a grave disguise, and walk abroad the world with a *mantle* of *Antiquity* about their shoulders, although they were nothing else but airy *Phantasms*, covered over with the *Cowl* of the *Monk* of *Viterbo*. For being himself somewhat more versed in the history of those elder times than generally persons were in the age he lived in, he made that unhappy use of his skill, to play the *Mountebank* with his learning; and to abuse the credulity of those who have better *stomachs* than *palates*, and can sooner swallow down the *compositions* that are given them, than find out the *Ingredients* of them. Thus *Annius* puts a good face on his *new-old Authors*, bids them be bold and confident, and they would fare the better: And the truth is they tell their story so punctually in all circumstances, in those things which had no certain conveyance to posterity, that that were sufficient ground to any intelligent person to question their authority. But lest his *Authors* should at any time want an *Interpreter* to make out their full meaning, he

sets himself a large Commentary upon them : And certainly he was the fittest person in the world to do it; for *cujus est condere, ejus est interpretari*; none so fit to explain *Annius*, as *Annius* himself. The whole story of this imposture, how he made the Inscriptions himself, and hid them under ground; how they were digged thence and brought to *Annius*; how *Annius* caused them to be sent to the *Magistrates*, and after published them in the *equipage* they are in, are at large related by that learned Bishop *Antonius Augustinus*, from *Latinus Latinus*.

Dialog. II.

Sett. 6.

From a like quarry to this, came out these other famous *Inscriptions*, walking under the specious title of *Antiquatum Ethruscarum fragmenta*, wherein, besides many palpable incongruities to the customs of those old times, discovered partly by *Leo Allatius* in his discourse concerning them, there are so many particular stories and circumstances related concerning *Noah's* being in *Italy*, and other things, so far beyond any probability of reason, that it is a wonder there are yet any persons pretending to learning, who should build their discourses upon such rotten and sandy foundations as these *Inscriptions* are. But though *Ixion* might, *Jupiter* would never have been deceived with a *Cloud* instead of *Juno*; so, though persons, unacquainted with the lineaments of truth, may be easily imposed on with appearances instead of her: yet such persons who have sagacity enough to discern the air of her countenance from the paint of forgeries, will never suffer themselves to be over-reached by such vain pretenders. But these *Impostors* are like the *Astrologers* at *Rome*, ever banished, and yet ever there; and so these are ever exploded by all lovers of truth, yet always find some to applaud and entertain them: Although it be more difficult to do so now in the present light of knowledge, and all advantages for learning, than it was in those elder times, when the *Heathen Priests* pretended to the *Monopoly of Learning* among themselves, and made it one of their great designs to keep all others in dependance on themselves, thereby to keep up their *reverence* the better among the people. And therefore all the *Records* they had of *Learning* or *History*, were

were carefully lockt up, and preserved among the *Priests*; and lest at any time others might get a view of them, they were sure to preserve them in a *peculiar Character* distinct from that in civil and common use. By which means the *Hethen Priests* had all imaginable opportunities and conveniences for deceiving the silly people, and thereby keeping them in an *obsequious Ignorance*, which is never the *Effect* of any true *Devotion*, but of the greatest *Superstition*.

It is well known of the *Egyptian Priests*, that the sacred Characters of their Temples were seldom made known to any but those of their own number and family (the *Priesthood* being there hereditary) or such others as by long converse had intimated themselves into their society, as some of the *Greek Philosophers* and *Historians* had done: And yet we have some reason to think they were not over-free and communicative to some of them, by the slender account they give of several things, which are supposed to be well known among the *Egyptians*. That the *Phenician Priests* had their *peculiar and sacred Characters* too, is evident from the words of *Philo Biblius* concerning *Sanchoniathon*, if we take *Bochartus* his Exposition of them: He tells us that his History was compared τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἀντιστοιχῶν, ἀποὺρφόροις Ἀμμενέων γραμμασιν ἃ ἐκ βῆ πᾶσι γινώμεται, with the Inscriptions in the Temples written in the *Ammonian letters*, which are known to few: *Literæ Ammoniorum* (saith *Bochartus*) *sunt literæ Templorum, literæ in sacris exceptæ*. For מן is the *Sun*, thence ימן the Temple of the *Sun*, whom the *Phenicians* worshipped as their principal Deity, under the name of *Beel-samen, the Lord of Heaven*. The same Author tells us out of *Diogenes Laertius*, of a Book of *Democritus*, καὶ ἐν βαβυλωνίᾳ ἱερῶν γραμμάτων by which it is evident that the *Babylonian Priests* had their *sacred Characters* too: And of a Testimony of *Theodoret* of all the *Grecian Temples*, ἐν τοῖς ἑλληνικοῖς ναοῖς ἰδοὶ τινες ἦσαν χαρακτῆρες γραμμάτων, ὧς ἱερᾶ τινος περὶ τοῦτο, that they had some *peculiar Characters* which were called *sacred*. But that learned Author thinks there is no necessity of understanding it peculiarly of the *Grecians*, because the *Greeks* Fa-

Sett. 7.

Diod. l. 3.

Euseb. Prap.

Evan. l. 10. c. 10.

Geogr. sacr. p. 2.

l. 2. c. 17.

Quest. in.

Gen. 61.

thers called all *Heathens* by the name of *Greeks* ; but if so, the Testimony is the larger , and amounts to an universal Testimony of the *Heathen Temples*.

SECT. 8.

Neither was this only peculiar to *them* , if we believe some persons of greater *Learning* than *Judgement* , who attribute this distinction of *sacred* and *vulgar Characters* to the *Jews* as well as others , but without any probability of reason. For these learned men being strongly possessed with the opinion of the *modern Jews* concerning the *Antiquity* of the present *Hebrew Characters* , and finding themselves pressed not only with the Testimony of some *ancient Rabbins* , but with the stronger evidence of the *ancient Shetels* about *Solomons* time , inscribed with the *Samaritan Letters* , have at last found this *Evasion* , that the *Samaritan Letters* were in *vulgar use* ; but the present *Characters* were then *sacred* , and not made *common* till after the time of the *Captivity*. But this seems to be a meer *shift* found out by some *modern Jews* , and greedily embraced by their Followers , because thereby they are in hopes to evade the strength of the contrary arguments , which otherwise they can find no probable solution of. And a meer shift it will appear to be, to any one that considers on how little ground of reason it stands : For none of those reasons which held for such a distinction of Characters among the *Heathens* , can have any place among the *Jews*. For it was never any part of *Gods* design to have the Law kept from the peoples view. Truth is never so fearful of being *seen abroad* ; it is only falsehood that walks under disguises , and must have its hiding-places to retreat to : Nay, *God* expressly commanded it as a duty of all the *Jews* , to search and study his Law , which they could not do , if it were locked up from them in an *unknown Character*. Did not *God* himself promulge it among the people of *Israel* by the *Ministry of Moses* ? did he not command it to be as *frontlets between their eyes* , and *signs upon their hands* (not that *Phylacteries* should be made of the Law to wear , as the *Pharisees* interpreted it , and others from them have mistaken) but that they should have the Law in continual remembrance , as if it were always between their eyes , and ingraven upon their hands.

Exod. 13. 16.
Deut. 6. 8.

Again,

Again, if we suppose the *Law* to be among the people, but in the *vulgar Character*, I would fain know, what *sanctity*, *Majesty*, and *authority* there was in that *character* more than in the words and matter? and if there were, how comes the *vulgar* use of it to be now here forbidden? and how durst *Ezra*, as is supposed, after the *Captivity*, profane so *sacred* a thing by exposing it to *Common* use? But granting them yet further, that it was *lawful*, but not *useful* to make use of that *sacred Character*; I demand then, how comes that *disuse* to continue so punctually till the time of *Ezra*, and that it should never be divulged before? when there was so great reason to make it common, since the *square letters* are less operose, more expedite and facile, than the *Samaritan*, which is, when time serves, used as a plea for their great *Antiquity*. But yielding yet more, that the *Sacred Character* was only used for the *authentick copy* of the *Law*, which was to decide all differences of other copies (which some run to as their last shift) I appeal to any mans *reason*, whether this be not the most improbable of all? For how could such a copy be the *Judge* of all others, which could not be read or understood by those who appealed to it? Or was the knowledge and reading of this *Character* peculiar to the *High Priest*, and conveyed down as a *Cabala* from one to another? But how many incongruities would follow hence, in case one *High Priest* should die before his son was capable of understanding the letters, and so that *Sacred treasure* must needs be lost; or had they it all by *inspiration*, and understood the *Sacred Character* by *Urim* and *Thummim*? Thus every way, this opinion among the *Jews* is pressed with inconveniencies, but it was most suitable to the *Heathen Priests* to maintain a *Meum* and *Tuum* between their own *Character* and the vulgar; For hereby they prohibited all prying into their mysteries by any, but those who had the same *Interest* with themselves, and therefore were unlikely to discover any thing that might lessen their reputation. Whereas, had there been nothing but *Truth* in their *Records*, or that *Truth* had been for their *Interest*, what need had there been of so great reservedness and privacy? but when the discovery of truth would

undecieve the world, it was their *Interest* to lock it up, and to give out such things to the *vulgar*, which might advance themselves and please them; which *artifices* of theirs give no small ground to *Question* the *credibility* of their *Histories*.

Seet. 9.

Especially if we add what we promised in the *last place*, to shew the want of *credibility* in the report of ancient times among them, which was not only *defectiveness*, and *uncertainty*, but *apparent partiality to themselves*, and *inconsistency with each other*. How evident is it in all these Nations we have spoken to, how much they strive to *inhance* the *reputation* of their own Nation, and to that end blend the *History* of other Nations with their own, to make theirs seem the greater? How much do the *Egyptians* tell us of the excellency of their ancient Laws and Government? and yet how evident is it, from their own *Histories*, that no such Laws were observed by their Kings as they speak of? Can we think that such Kings as *Chemmis* and the rest of them, who built those vast structures of the *Pyramids*, and employed *myriads* of men for so many years for the doing of them, would be content to be so dictated by their *Laws*, as *Hecataeus* and *Diodorus* tell us they were to be? Nay it seems to be very suspicious, that the great enterprises of their famous *Sesoosis* are merely *fabulous*, and some think an attributing to themselves, what was done by the *Assyrian Emperour* in his time. By which we may guess, what to think of the great *Conquests* of *Osiris* and *Isis*, and their subduing almost the whole world to them. And it is most evident how partial the *Egyptians* are in dissembling their greatest losses; as is clear in the story of the *Conquest* of *Pharao Neco* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, Jer. 46. 12. of which there is not the least mention in *Herodotus* or *Diodorus*; But on the contrary, *Herodotus* tells us this *Necos*, as he calls him, conquered the *Syrians* at *Magdalos*; and the story of *Vaphres* and *Amasis* in him seems to be only a disguise of *Nebuchadnezzars* *Conquest*; only lest men should think them conquered by a *Forraigner*, they make *Amasis* to be an *Egyptian Plebeian*. Again, what a vast number of *Cities* doth *Diodorus* tell us of that were in *Egypt* in their

Lib. 2.

Biblioth. l. I.

their eldest times ? no less than 18000. when yet himself confesseth in the time of *Ptolomæus Lagi* there were reckoned but somewhat above 3000 Cities, and then *Ægypt* was the most populous that ever it had been. How probable doth this sound, that in those eldest times such vast multitudes of Cities should be erected ? But the truth is, it is not unsuitable to their opinion of the production of the first men, which were caused, say they, by the heat of *Sun*, and the mud of *Nilus* ; and it is certain then they might be the most populous Nation in the world : for there could be no defect as to either efficient or material cause, there being mud enough to produce *Myriads*, and the *Sun* hot enough to impregnate it. The partiality of other Nations hath been already discoursed of in our passage ; and so likewise hath their mutual repugnancy to , and inconsistency with each other : Which yet might be more fully manifested from the contradictions in reference to the *Ægyptian History*, between *Manetho*, *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Dicæarchus*, *Eratosthenes*, and all who have spoken of it ; as to the *Assyrian Empire* between *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, and *Julius Africanus* ; as to the *Persian Empire* between *Herodotus* and *Ctesias*, and those in no inconsiderable things, as is evident in *Photius* his *excerpta* out of him. Among the *Grecians* we have already discovered it as to their *History* and *Geography* ; and if we should enter into their *Theology*, and the History of that, we should find their other differences inconsiderable, if compared with these. Of which we may partly make a conjecture by the incredible spight that is born by the gravest *Greek Authors*, as *Strabo*, *Plutarch*, and others, towards *Euemerus Siculus*, for offering to deliver the History of *Jupiter*, which he saith, he transcribed from the golden pillar in the Temple of *Jupiter Triphyllius* in *Panctotis*.

But I suppose enough hath been discovered already, to prove that there is no credibility in any of those *Heathen Histories*, which pretend to give an account of ancient times, there being in all of them so much defect

and insufficiency, so great uncertainty and confusion, so much partiality and inconsistency with each other. It remains now that I proceed to demonstrate the credibility of that account of antient times, which is reported in the Sacred Scriptures, which will be the second part of our Task.

BOOK



BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

The certainty of the Writings of Moses.

In order to the proving the truth of Scripture-history, several Hypotheses laid down. The first concerns the reasonableness of preserving the ancient History of the world in some certain Records, from the importance of the things, and the inconveniencies of meer tradition or constant Revelation. The second concerns the certainty that the Records under Moses his name, were undoubtedly his. The certainty of the matter of fact enquired into in general, and proved as to this particular by universal consent, and settling a Commonwealth upon his Laws. The impossibility of an Imposture as to the writings of Moses demonstrated. The pleas to the contrary largely answered.

HAVING sufficiently demonstrated the want of creditability in the account of ancient times, given by those Nations who have made the greatest pretence to *Learning* and *Antiquity* in the world, we now proceed to evince the *credibility* and *certainty* of that account which is given us in *sacred Scriptures*: In order to which I shall premise these following *Hypotheses*.

It stands to the greatest reason, that an account of things so concerning and remarkable, should not be alwayes left to the uncertainty of an oral tradition; but should be timely entred

Sect. 1.

Hyp. 1.

into certain Records, to be preserved to the memory of posterity. For it being of concernment to the world, in order to the establishment of belief as to future things, to be fully settled in the belief *that all things past were managed by Divine providence*, there must be some certain Records of former ages, or else the mind of man will be perpetually hovering in the greatest uncertainties : Especially where there is such a mutual dependance and concatenation of one thing with another, as there is in all the Scripture-history. For take away but any one of the main foundations of the *Mosaical history*, all the *superstructure* will be exceedingly weakened, if it doth not fall quite to the ground. For mans obligation to obedience unto God, doth necessarily suppose his original to be from him ; his hearkning to any proposals of favour from God, doth suppose his *Apostasie* and fall ; Gods designing to shew mercy and favour to fallen man, doth suppose that there must be some way whereby the Great Creator must reveal himself as to the conditions on which fallen man may expect a recovery ; the revealing of these conditions in such a way whereon a *suspicious* (because guilty) creature may firmly rely, doth suppose so certain a recording of them, as may be least liable to any suspicion of imposture or deceit. For although nothing else be in it self necessary from God to man, in order to his salvation, but the bare revealing in a certain way the terms on which he must expect it ; yet considering the unbounded nature of *Divine goodness*, respecting not only the good of some particular persons, but of the whole society of mankind, it stands to the greatest reason that such a revelation should be so *propounded*, as might be with equal certainty conveyed to the community of mankind. Which could not with any such evidence of *credibility* be done by private and particular revelations (which give satisfaction only to the inward senses of the partakers of them) as by a publick recording of the matters of *Divine revelation* by such a person who is enabled to give the world all *reasonable satisfaction*, that what he did was not of any private design of his own head, but that he was deputed to it by no less than

Divine

Divine authority. And therefore it stands to the highest reason, that where *Divine revelation* is necessary for the certain requiring of *assent*, the matter to be believed should have a certain uniform conveyance to mens minds, rather than that perpetually *New revelations* should be required for the making known of those things; which being once recorded, are not lyable to so many *impostures* as the other way might have been under pretended *Revelations*. For then men are not put to a continual tryal of every person pretending *Divine revelation*, as to the evidences which he brings of *Divine authority*, but the great matters of concernment being already recorded and attested by all rational evidence as to the truth of the things, their minds therein rest satisfied without being under a continual *hesitancy*, lest the *Revelation* of one should contradict another.

For supposing that God had left the matters of *Divine* Sect. 2.
revelation unrecorded at all, but left them to be discovered in every age by a *spirit of prophecy*, by such a multitude as might be sufficient to inform the world of the truth of the things; We cannot but conceive that an innumerable company of *croaking Enthusiasts* would be continually pretending *commissions* from Heaven, by which the minds of men would be left in continual *distraktion*, because they would have no certain *infallible rules* given them, whereby to difference the *good and evil spirit* from each other. But now supposing God to inspire some particular persons, not only to *reveal*, but to *record Divine truths*, then whatever *evidences* can be brought attesting a *Divine revelation* in them, will likewise prove the undoubted *certainity* and *infallibility* of those writings, it being impossible that persons employed by a *God of truth* should make it their design to impose upon the world; which gives us a *rational account*, why the *wise God* did not suffer the *History* of the world to lie still *unrecorded*, but made choice of such a *person* to record it, who gave abundant evidence to the world that he acted no private design, but was peculiarly employed by *God himself* for the doing of it, as will appear afterwards. Besides, we find by our former discourse, how lyable the most certain *tradition* is to be corrupted in progress of time, where there

are no standing records, though it were at first delivered by persons of undoubted credit. For we have no reason to doubt, but that the *tradition* of the *old world*, the *flood* and the *consequences* of it, with the *nature* and *worship* of the *true God*, were at first spread over the greatest part of the world in its first *plantations*; yet we see how soon for want of certain *conveyance*, all the ancient *tradition* was *corrupted* and abused into the greatest *Idolatry*. Which might be less wondered at, had it been only in those parts which were furthest remote from the seat of those grand transactions; but thus we find it was even among those *families* who had the nearest residence to the place of them, and among those persons who were not far off in a lineal *descent* from the persons mainly concerned in them; as is most evident in the *family* out of which *Abraham* came (who was himself the tenth from *Noah*) yet of them it is said, *that they served other Gods*. How unlikely then was it, that this *tradition* should be afterwards preserved entire, when the people *God* had peculiarly chosen to himself, were so mixed among the *Egyptians*, and so prone to the *Idolatries* of the Nations round about them, and that even after *God* had given them a written *Law* attested with the greatest *miracles*? What would they have done then, had they never been brought forth of *Egypt* by such *signs* and *wonders*, and had no certain records left to preserve the memory of former ages? Thus we see how much it stands to the greatest reason, that so memorable things should be digested into sacred Records.

·Sect. 3.
Hyp. 2.

We have as great certainty that *Moses* was the author of the records going under his name, as we can have of any matter of fact done at so great a distance of time from us. We are to consider that there are two very distinct questions to be thought of concerning a *Divine Revelation* to any person at a considerable distance of time from us; and those are what evidences can be given that the matters recorded are of a true divine revelation; and what evidence we have of the truth of the matter of fact, that such things were recorded by such persons. They who do not carefully distinguish between these two questions, will soon run themselves into an inextricable

tricable labyrinth, when they either seek to understand themselves, or explain to others the grounds on which they believe the *Scriptures* to be the *Word of God*. The first step in order to which must be the proving the *undoubted certainty of the matter of fact*, or the truth of the History, that such *persons were really existent*, and did either *do or record* the things we speak of: After this, succeeds the other to prove, not only the *real existence* of the things, but that the *persons who recorded* the things were *assisted* by an *infallible spirit*; then there can be no reason at all to doubt, but those records are the *Word of God*. The first of these, is, that which at present we enquire after, the certainty of the matter of fact, that the Records under the name of *Moses* were undoubtedly his. And here it will be most unreasonable for any to seek for further *evidence and demonstration* of it, than the *matter to be proved is capable of*. But if they should, I suppose we have sufficient reason to demonstrate the folly of such a demand, and that on these accounts.

1. Whoever yet undertook to bring *matters of fact* into *Mathematical demonstrations*, or thought he had ground to question the certainty of any thing that was not proved in a *Mathematical* way to him? who would ever undertake to prove that *Archimedes* was killed at *Syracuse* by any of the *demonstrations* he was then about? or that *Euclide* was the undoubted Author of the *Geometry* under his name? or do men question these things for want of such *demonstrations*? Yet this is all we at present desire, but the same liberty here which is used in any thing of a like nature.

2. I demand of the *person* who denies this *moral certainty* to be *sufficient* for an *assent*, whether he doth question every thing in the world, which he was not present at the doing of himself? If he be peremptorily resolved to *believe* nothing but *what he sees*, he is fit for nothing but a *voyage to Anticyra*, or to be soundly purged with *Hellebore* to free him from those *cloudy humours* that make him suspect the whole world to be an *imposture*. But we cannot suppose any man so destitute of reason, as to question the truth of every matter of fact which he doth not see himself; if he

doth then firmly believe any thing, there must be supposed sufficient grounds to induce him to such a belief. And then what ground can there be to question the *certainity* of such things which have as great evidence as any of those things have which he most firmly believes? and this is all we desire from him.

3. Do we not see that the most concerning and weighty actions of mens lives, are built on no other foundation than this *moral certainity*? yet men do not in the least question the truth of the thing they rely upon: As is most evident in all titles to estates derived from *Ancestors*, either by *donation* or *purchase*: In all *trading* which goes upon the *moral certainity*, that there are such places as the *Indies*, or *France*, or *Spain*, &c. In all *journeyings*, that there is such a place as that I am going to, and this is the way thither; for these we have but this *moral certainity*; for the *contrary* to both these are possible, and the *affirmatives* are *indemonstrable*. In *eating* and *drinking* there is a *possibility* of being poisoned by every bit of meat or drop or drink; do we therefore continually doubt, whether we shall be so or no? Chiefly this is seen in all *natural affection* and piety in *Children* towards *Parents*, which undoubtedly suppose the truth of that, which it was impossible they could be witnesses of themselves; viz. *their coming out of their Mothers wombs*. And doth any one think this sufficient ground to question his Mother, because the contrary is impossible to be demonstrated to him? In short, then, either we must destroy all *Historical faith* out of the world, and believe nothing (though never so much attested) but what we see ourselves, or else we must acknowledge, that a *moral certainity* is a sufficient foundation for an *undoubted assent*, not such a one *cui non potest subesse falsum*, but such a one *cui non subest dubium*, i. e. an *assent un'oubted*, though not *infallible*. By which we see what little reason the *Atheist* on one side can have to question the truth of the *Scriptures*, as to the History of it; and what little ground the *Papists* on the other side have to make a pretence of the necessity of *infallibility*, as to the *proposal* of such things where *moral certainity* is sufficient, that is, to the matter of fact.

Which

Which I now come to prove, as to the subject in hand; *Scct. 4.*
viz. that the writings of Moses are undoubtedly his, which
 I prove by a twofold argument: 1. *An universal consent of*
persons, who were best able to know the truth of the things in
question. 2. *The settling of a Commonwealth upon the Laws*
delivered by Moses. 1. *The universal Consent of persons*
most capable of judging in the Case in hand. I know nothing
 the most scrupulous and inquisitive mind can possibly desire
 in order to satisfaction, concerning any matter of fact, be-
 yond an *universal Consent* of such persons who have a
 greater *capacity of knowing* the truth of it than we can have:
 And those are all such persons who have lived nearest those
 times when the things were done, and have best understood
 the affairs of the times when the things were pretended to
 be done. Can we possibly conceive, that among the people
 of the *Jews*, who were so exceedingly prone to transgress
 the *Law of Moses*, and to *fall into Idolatry*, but if there
 had been any the least suspicion of any falsity or imposture
 in the writings of *Moses*, the ringleaders of their revolts
 would have sufficiently promulged it among them, as the
 most *plausible plea* to draw them off from the worship of
 the true God? Can we think that a Nation and religion so
maligned as the *Jewish* were, could have escaped discovery,
 if there had been any deceit in it, when so many lay in wait
 continually to expose them to all *Contumelies* imaginable?
 Nay, among themselves in their frequent *Apostasies*, and
 occasions given for such a pretence, how comes this to be
 never heard of, nor in the least questioned, whether the *Law*
 was *undoubtedly* of *Moses* his writing or no? What an
 excellent plea would this have been for *Jeroboams Calves* in
Dan and *Bethel*; for the *Samaritans Temple* on *Mount*
Gerizim, could any the least suspicion have been raised
 among them, concerning the *authentickness* of the *fundamen-*
tal records of the *Jewish Commonwealth*? And which is most
 observable, the *Jews* who were a people strangely *suspicious*
 and *incredulous*, while they were *fed and clothed with mira-*
cles, yet could never find ground to question this. Nay,
 and *Moses* himself, we plainly see, was hugely *envied* by
 many of the *Israelites* even in the *wilderness*, as is evident

in the *Conspiracy* of *Corah* and his complices, and that on this very ground, *that he took too much upon him*; how unlikely then is it, that amidst so many enemies he should dare to venture any thing into *publick records*, which was not most *undoubtedly true*, or undertake to prescribe a *Law* to oblige the people to posterity? Or that after his own age any thing should come out under his name, which would not be presently detected by the *emulatours* of his glory? What then, is the thing it self *incredible*? surely *not*, that *Moses* should write the records we speak of. Were not they able to understand the *truth* of it? What! not those, who were in the same age, and conveyed it down by a certain tradition to posterity? Or did not the *Israelites* all constantly *believe* it? What! not they, who would sooner part with their *lives* and *fortunes*, than admit any *variation* or alteration as to their *Law*?

Señ. 5.

Well, but if we should suppose *the whole Jewish Nation partial to themselves*, and that out of honour to the memory of so great a person as *Moses*, they should attribute their ancient *Laws* and records to him: Which is all that *Infidelity* its self can imagine in this Case; Yet this cannot be with any shadow of reason pretended. For,

1.

1. Who were those *persons*, who did give out this *Law* to the *Jews* under *Moses* his name? Certainly they, who undertake to *contradict* that which is received by *common consent*, must bring stronger and clearer evidence than that on which that consent is grounded; or else their *exceptions* deserve to be rejected with the highest indignation. What proof can be then brought, that not only the *Jewish Nation*, but the whole *Christian world* hath been so lamentably *fooled* to believe those things with an undoubted assent, which are only the contrivances of some cunning men?

2.

2. At what time could these things be contrived? Either while the *memory* of *Moses* and his actions were *remaining*, or *afterwards*. First, how could it possibly be, when his *memory* was *remaining*? for then all things were so *fresh* in their *memories*, that it was *impossible* a thing of this universal nature could be forged of him. If *after*, then I demand, whether the people had observed the *Law* of *Moses* before
or

or no? if *not*, then they must certainly know it at the time of its promulgation to be *counterfeit*, for had it been from *Moses*, it would have been observed before their times; if it was observed before, then either *continually* down from the time of *Moses*, or not? If *continally* down, then it was of *Moses* his doing, if we suppose him to have had that authority among the people which the *objection* supposeth; if *not*, then still the nearer *Moses* his time, the more *difficult* such a *counterfeiting* could be; because the *Constitutions* which *Moses* had left among them, would have remained in their memories, whereby they would easily reject all *pretences* and *counterfeits*.

3. How can we conceive the Nation of the *Jews* would have ever embraced such a *Law*, had it not been of *Moses* his enacting among them in that state of time when he did? For then the people were in fittest capacity to receive a *Law*, being grown a great people, and therefore *necessary* to have *Laws*; newly delivered from *bondage*, and therefore wanting *Laws* of their own; and entering into a settled state of *Commonwealth*, which was the most proper season of giving *Laws*.

These considerations make it so clear, that it is almost impossible to conceive the Nation of the *Jews* could have their *Laws* given to them but at the time of their being in the *wilderness*, before they were settled in *Canaan*. For suppose we at present, to gratifie so far the *objection*, that these *Laws* were brought forth long after the constitution of the government and the national settlement under *Moses* his name; how *improbable*, nay how *impossible* is it to alter the *fundamental Laws* of a Nation after long settlement? what *confusion of interests* doth this bring? what *disturbance* among all sorts of people, who must be *disseised* of their rights, and brought to such strange unwonted *customs* so seemingly against their *interests*, as many of the *Constitutions* among the *Jews* were? For can we imagine, that a people always devoted to their own interest, would after it had been quietly settled in their Land, by *Constitutions* after the custom of other Nations, presently under a pretence of a copy of *Laws* found (that were pretended to be given by one in former ages of great esteem, called *Moses*) throw open all their former *inclosures*, and part with their former *Laws*,

Sett. 6.

for these of which they have no evidence, but the words of those that told it them? We have a clear instance for this among the *Romans*; although there were great evidence given of the *undoubted certainty*, that the *books* found in *Numa's* grave by *Petilius* were *his*, yet because they were adjudged by the *Senate* to be against the present *Laws*, they were without further enquiry adjudged to be burnt. Was not here the greatest likelihood that might be, that these should have taken place among the *Romans*, for the great *veneration* for *wisdom* which *Numa* was in among them, and the great evidence that these were *certain remainders* of his, wherein he gave a true account of the *superstitions* in use among them? yet lest the *state* should be *unsettled* by it, they were prohibited so much as a publick *view*, when the *Prator* had sworn they were against the established *Laws*. Can we then conceive the *Jewish Nation* would have embraced so *burdensome* and *ceremonious* a *Law* as *Moses's* was, had it been brought among them in such a way as the *books* of *Numa*, though with all imaginable evidence, that it was undoubtedly *his*, especially when they were engaged to the observation of some *Laws* or *customs* already, by which their *Commonwealth* had been established? And withal these *Laws* of *Moses* seeming so much against the *interest* and *good husbandry* of a *Nation*, as all the *neighbour Nations* thought, who for that accused them to be an *idle* and *slothful* people, as they judged by their *resting wholly one day in seven*, the *great and many solemn feasts* they had, the *repairing of all the males* to *Jerusalem thrice a year*; the *Sabbatical years*, *years of Jubilee*, &c. These things were apparently against the *Interest* of such a *Nation*, whose great *subsistence* was upon *pasturage* and *agriculture*. So that it is evident these *Laws* respected not the *outward interest* of the *Nation*, and so could not be the *contrivance* of any *Politicians* among them, but did immediately aim at the *honour* of the *God* whom they served, for whom they were to part even with their *civil interests*: The doing of which by a people generally taken notice of for a particular *Love* of their own *concernments*, is an *impregnable argument* these *Laws* could not take place among them, had they not been given by

Moses

Moses at the time of their *unsettlement*, and that their future *settlement* did depend upon their present *observation* of them; which is an evidence too that they could be of no less than *divine original*: Which is more than I was to prove at present.

4. Were not these writings undoubtedly *Moses's*; *Sett. 7.* whence should the *neighbour Nations* about the *Jews* notwithstanding the hatred of the *Jewish Religion*, retain so venerable an opinion of the *wisdom of Moses*? The *Egyptians* accounted him one of their *Priests* (which notes the esteem they had of his learning) as appears by the *testimonies* produced out of *Charemon* and *Manetho* by *Josephus*. *C. Appl. l. 1. Bibl. l. 1. Geog. 16. De sublim.* *Diodorus Siculus* speaks of him with great respect among the famous *Legislatours*, and so doth *Strabo*, who speaks in commendation of the Religion established by him. The testimony of *Longinus* is sufficiently known, that *Moses* was no man of any vulgar wit (*ἐχ' ὁ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς*) *Chalcidius* calls him *sapientissimus Moses* (although I must not dissemble that *Chalcidius* hath been, I think, undeservedly reckoned among *heathen writers*, though he comments on *Plato's Timæus*, it being most probable that he was a *Christian Platonist*, which might more probably make *Vaninus* call him *circumforaneum blateronem*) but though we exempt *Chalcidius* out of the number of those *Heathens*, who have born testimony to the *wisdom of Moses*, yet there are number enough besides him produced by *Justin Martyr*, *Cyrril*, and others, whose evidence is clear and full to make us undoubtedly believe, that there could never have been so universal and uninterrupted a tradition concerning the *writings and Laws of Moses*, had they not been certainly his, and conveyed down in a continual succession from his time to our present age. Which will be yet more clear, if we consider in the second place, that the *national Constitution and settlement of the Jews*, did depend on the truth of the *Laws and writings of Moses*. Can we have more undoubted evidence, that there were such persons as *Solon*, *Lycurgus*, and *Numa*, and that the *Laws* bearing their names were theirs, than the *History* of the several *Common-wealths* of *Athens*, *Sparta*, and *Rome*, who were governed by those *Laws*? When *writings* are not of general concernment, they may be

C. Appl. l. 1. Bibl. l. 1. Geog. 16. De sublim.

V. Vos. de Idol. l. 2. c. 45.

V. Grot. An. de verit. rel. Christ. l. 2.

more easily counterfeited ; but when they concern the rights, privileges, and government of a Nation, there will be enough whose interest will lead them to prevent impostures. It is no easie matter to forge a *Magna Charta*, and to invent *Laws* ; mens caution and prudence is never so quick-sighted as in matters which concern their estates and freeholds. The general interest of men lyes contrary to such impostures, and therefore they will prevent their obtaining among them. Now the *Laws of Moses* are incorporated into the very Republick of the *Jews*, and their subsistence and Government depends upon them, their Religion and *Laws* are so interwoven one with the other, that one cannot be broken off from the other. Their right to their temporal possessions in the land of *Canaan* depends on their owning the Sovereignty of God who gave them to them ; and on the truth of the History recorded by *Moses* concerning the promises made to the Patriarchs. So that on that account it was impossible those *Laws* should be counterfeit on which the welfare of a Nation depended, and according to which they were governed ever since they were a Nation. So that I shall now take it to be sufficiently proved, that the writings under the name of *Moses* were undoubtedly his ; for none, who acknowledge the *Laws* to have been his, can have the face to deny the History, there being so necessary a connexion between them ; and the book of *Genesis* being nothing else but a general and very necessary introduction to that which follows. I deny not but the history of *Moses* might, according to the tradition of the *Jews*, and the belief of others, be revised by *Ezra* or the men of the great Synagogue after the *Jews* return from captivity, as appears by the names of places, and other passages not suitable to the time of *Moses* ; but I utterly deny that the *Pentateuch* was not of *Moses* his penning, or that it was only a Collection out of the Diaries and Annals of the Nation : For throughout the Scripture the very historical passages are attributed to *Moses*, and in all probability the Samaritan *Pentateuch* bears date before the Captivity ; by which it still appears that those books are truly the books of *Moses*.

CHAP. II.

Moses his certain knowledge of what he writ.

The third Hypothesis concerns the certainty of the matter of Moses his history; that gradually proved: First, Moses his knowledge cleared by his education, and experience, and certain information. His education in the wisdom of Ægypt; what that was. The old Ægyptian learning enquired into, the conveniencies for it. Of the Ægyptian Priests. Moses reckoned among them for his knowledge. The Mathematical, Natural, Divine, and Moral learning of Ægypt: their Political wisdom most considerable. The advantage of Moses above the Greek Philosophers, as to wisdom and reason. Moses himself an eye-witness of most of his history: the certain uninterrupted tradition of the other part among the Jews, manifested by rational evidence.

HAVING thus far cleared our way, we come to the third Sect. 1.
Hypothesis, which is, Hyp. 3.
There are as manifest proofs of the undoubted truth and certainty of the History recorded by Moses, as any can be given concerning any thing which we yield the firmest assent unto. Here it must be considered, that we proceed in a way of rational evidence to prove the truth of the thing in hand, as to which, if in the judgement of impartial persons the arguments produced be strong enough to convince an unbyassed mind; It is not material, whether every wrangling Atheist will sit down contented with them. For usually persons of that inclination rather than judgement, are more resolved against light, than inquisitive after it, and rather seek to stop the chinks at which any light might come in, than open the windows for the free and chearful entertainment of it. It will certainly be sufficient to make it appear, that no man can deny the truth of that part of Scripture which we are now speaking of, without offering manifest violence to his own faculties, and making it appear.

appear to the world, that he is one wholly forsaken of his own reason: which will be satisfactorily done, if we can clear these things: *First, That it was morally impossible Moses should be ignorant of the things he undertook to write of, and so be deceived himself. Secondly, That it was utterly impossible he should have any design in deceiving others in reporting it. Thirdly, That it is certain from all rational evidence, that he hath not deceived the world, but that his History is undoubtedly true.* First, *That it was morally impossible Moses should be deceived himself, or be ignorant of the things which he writ of.* Two things are requisite to prevent a mans being deceived himself. *First, That he be a person of more than ordinary judgement, wisdom, and knowledge. Secondly, That he have sufficient information concerning the things he undertakes to write of.* If either of these two be wanting, it is possible for a man of integrity to be deceived; for an honest heart hath not always an *Urim* and *Thummim* upon it; nor is fidelity always furnished with the acutest intellectuals. The simplicity of the Dove is as liable to be deceived it self, as the subtilty of the serpent is to deceive others; but where the wisdom of the Serpent is, to prevent being deceived, and the Doves innocency in not deceiving others, there are all the qualifications can be desired in any one who undertakes only to tell the Truth. First then that *Moses was a person of a great understanding, and sufficiently qualified to put a difference between truth and falsehood,* will appear; first, *from the ingenuity of his education; secondly, from the ripeness of his judgement, and greatness of his experience when he penned these things.*

First, We begin with his education. And here we require at present no further assent to be given to what is reported concerning *Moses* in *Scripture*, than what we give to *Plutarchs* lives, or any other relations concerning the actions of persons who lived in former ages. Two things then we find recorded in *Scripture* concerning *Moses* his education; that he was brought up in the Court of Egypt, and that he was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians; and these two will abundantly prove the ingenuity of his education, viz. That he was a person both conversant in civil affairs, and

and acquainted with the abstruser parts of all the *Egyptian* wisdom.

And I confess there is nothing to me which doth advance *Señ. 2.*
so much the repute of the ancient *Egyptian Learning*, as
that the *Spirit of God* in Scripture should take so much no-
tice of it, as to set forth a person (otherwise renowned for
greater accomplishments) by his *skill* in this. For if it be
below the *wisdom* of any ordinary person, to set forth a
person by that which in it self is no matter of *commendation*;
how much less can we imagine it of that infinite wisdom
which inspired *Stephen* in that *Apology* which he makes for
himself against the *Libertines*, who charged him with *con-*
tempt of *Moses* and the *Law*? And therefore certainly this
was some very *observable* thing, which was brought in as a
singular commendation of *Moses*, by that person whose
design was to make it appear how high an esteem he had of
him. And hence it appears that *Learning* is not only in it
self a great *accomplishment* of *humane nature*, but that it
ought to be looked upon with *veneration*, even in those who
have excellencies of a higher nature to commend them. If
a *Pearl* retains its *excellency* when it lies upon a *dunghil*, it
can certainly *lose* nothing of its *lustre* by being set in a *Crown*
of gold; if *Learning* be commendable in an *Egyptian*, it
is no less in *Moses*, where it is *enamelled* with more noble per-
fections, than of it self it can reach unto. All the question
is, Whether the ancient learning of the *Egyptians* was such
as might be supposed to improve the reason and understand-
ing of men to such an height, as thereby to make them more
capable of putting a difference between truth and falshood?
Whether it were such an overflowing *Nilus* as would *enrich*
the *understanding* of all those who were in a capacity to re-
ceive its streams? The truth is, there want not grounds of
suspicion, that the old *Egyptian Learning* was not of that
elevation which the present distance of our age makes us apt
to think it was. And a learned man hath in a set discourse
endeavoured to shew the great *defects* that there were in it;
Neither can it, I think, be denyed, but according to the re-
ports we have now concerning it, some parts of their *Learn-*
ing were *frivolous*, others *obscure*, a great deal *Magical*,

Conringius de
Herm. Medic.
c. 10, 11, 12.

and the rest short of that improvement, which the accession of the parts and industry of after ages gave unto it. But yet it is again as evident, that some parts of learning were invented by the *Egyptians*, others much improved, and that the *Greeks* did at first set up with the stock they borrowed out of *Egypt*, and that learning chiefly flourished there, when there was (I had almost said) an *Egyptian* darkness of Ignorance overspreading the face of *Greece* as well as other Nations.

Sect. 3.

Which will appear by these considerations, the great antiquity of their repute for Learning, the great advantages they had for promoting it, and the parts of Learning most in use among them. This, though it may seem a digression here, will yet tend to promote our design, by shewing thereby how qualified and accomplished *Moses* was to deliver to the world an history of ancient times. If we believe *Macrobius*, there was no people in the world could vye for Learning with the *Egyptians*, who makes *Egypt* in one place, the mother of all arts, and in another, the *Egyptians* omnium Philosophia disciplinarum parentes, the Fathers of all the Philosophick Sciences; he derives elsewhere the original of Astronomy from them, quos constat primos omnium cælum metiri, & scrutari ausos: though it be more probable that the Nativity even of Astronomy it self, was first calculated by the *Chaldeans*, from whom it was conveyed to the *Egyptians*. He likewise appropriates all divine knowledge to them, where he saith they were Soli rerum divinarum conscii, and after calls *Egypt*, divinarum omnium disciplinarum compotem. It is sufficiently notorious what great repute the *Egyptian* Learning hath been in, with some in our latter times, in that our *Chymists* look upon it as the greatest honour to their profession, that they think they can claim kindred of the old *Egyptian* Learning, and derive the pedigree of their *Chymistry* from the old *Egyptian* *Hermes*. But that vain pretence is sufficiently refuted by the fore-mentioned learned man *Conringius*, in his Tract on this subject, de *Hermeticâ Medicinâ*. *Franciscus Patricius* professeth himself so great an admirer of the old *Egyptian* Learning, that he thought it would be no bad exchange, if the *Peripatetick* Philosophy were

Saturn. l. 1. cap.

16. in Somn.

Scip. l. 1. c. 19.

cap. 21.

Saturn. l. 1. cap.

14. l. 7. c. 13.

were extruded, and the old *Egyptian* received instead of it. But the world is now grown wiser, than to receive his *Hermes Trismegistus* for the Author of the old *Egyptian Philosophy*, the credit of his Author being for ever blasted, and the doctrine contained in the books under his name, manifested to be a mere *Cento*, a confused mixture of the *Christian*, *Platonick*, and *Egyptian* doctrine together. So that we could hardly maintain the justness of the repute of the ancient *Egyptian Learning* from any thing now extant of it; but yet we see no reason to question it, especially since it is so honourably spoken of in *Sacred Writ*, and seems in it to have been made the *standard* and *measure* of humane *wisdom*. For which we have this observable testimony, that when the *wisdom* of *Solomon* is spoken of with the greatest advantage and commendation, it is set forth with this character, *that it exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the East Country, and all the wisdom of Ægypt*. Whence it is most natural and easie to argue, that certainly their learning must be accounted the greatest at that time in the world; or else it could not have been inferred, that *Solomon* was wiser than *all men*, because his *wisdom* excelled *theirs*, unless we suppose their *wisdom* to have been the *greatest* in that age of the world, when the *wisdom* of the *Grecians* (although in that time *Homer* is supposed to flourish) was not thought worthy the taking notice of. We see from hence then, as from an irrefragable testimony, that the *wisdom* of the *Egyptians* anciently was no *trivial Pedantry*, nor meer *superstitious* and *Magical rites*, but that there was something in it *solid* and *substantial*, or it had not been worth *triumphing* over by the *wisdom* of *Solomon*: It being true of that, what *Lipsius* saith of the *Roman Empire*, *Quicquid dignum vinci videbatur, vicit; cetera non tam non potuit quam contempsit*; it was an argument of some great worth, that was over-topped and conquered by it.

1 King. 4. 29,
30, 31.

De Magnitud.
Rom. l. 1. c. 3.

Thus we see how just the repute of the ancient *Egyptian Learning* is from *Testimony*, and we shall find as great reason for it, when we consider the great *advantages* the *Egyptians* had for promoting of *Learning* among them. Two ways men come to knowledge, either by *tradition* from others,

Vid. Arist. Me-
taph. I. l. c. I.

Herod. l. 2.
Diod. l. 1.
Strab. l. 17.
Cul. Rhodi. l.
18. c. 34.

or by *observation* of their own; what the *Egyptians* had the *first* way, will be spoken to afterwards; we now consider the latter of these. All *knowledge* arising from *observation*, must be either of those *Sciences* which immediately conduce to the benefit of mens lives, or such whose end is to improve mens *rational faculties* in the knowledge of things. The former *necessity* will put men upon the finding out, the latter require *secessum & otia*, freedom from other employments, a mind *addicted* to them, and *industry* in the study of them, and a care to *preserve* their inventions in them. The study of *Geometry* among the *Egyptians*, owed its *original* to *necessity*; for the river *Nile* being swelled with the showers falling in *Ethiopia*, and thence annually over-flowing the Country of *Egypt*, and by its violence overturning all the marks they had to distinguish their lands, made it necessary for them upon every *abatement* of the flood to survey their Lands, to find out every one his own by the quantity of the ground upon the survey. The necessity of which put them upon a more diligent enquiry into that study, that thereby they might attain to some exactness in that, which was to be of such necessary, constant and perpetual use. Thence we find the invention of *Geometry* particularly attributed by *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Strabo* and others, to the *Egyptians*. This skill of theirs they after improved into a greater benefit, *viz.* the conveying the water of *Nile* into those places where it had not overflowed to so great a height, as to give them hopes of an ensuing plenty; which they did by the artificial cutting of several *Channels* for that end, wherein, saith *Strabo*, the *Egyptians Art and Industry out-went Nature it self*. By this likewise they observed the height of the over-flowing of the river, whereby they knew what harvest to expect the following year; which they did by a well near *Memphis* (from the use of it called Νηλομίττειον) upon the walls of which were the marks of several cubits, which they observed and published to all, that they might provide themselves accordingly. We see what grounds there are, even from profit and advantage, to make us believe that the *Egyptians* were skilled in *Geometry*, and the knowledge relating thereto.

And

And for the promoting of all other knowledge whose end is *Contemplation*, the very constitution of their *Common-wealth* did much conduce thereto: For thereby it was provided that there should always be a sufficient number of persons freed from all other *employments*, who might devote themselves to a sedulous enquiry into the natures of things. Such were the *Egyptian Priests*, who by the peculiar nature of the *Egyptian Superstitions* were freed from that burdensom service of *sacrificing beasts*, which the Priests of other Nations were continually employed about, and so they enjoyed not only an *easy* but a very *honourable employment*; for they were the persons of the greatest honour, esteem, and authority among the *Egyptians*, of which rank, as far as I can find, all were accounted, who were not *Souldiers*, *Husbandmen*, or *Artificers*. For *Strabo* mentions no *Nobility* at all in *Egypt* distinct from the *Priests*; for he dividesthe whole *Common-wealth* into *Souldiers*, *Husbandmen*, and *Priests*. And telling us that the other two were employed about matters of war, and the *Kings* revenues in peace, he adds, οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ φιλοσοφίαν ἤπαιον καὶ ἀστρονομίαν, ὁμιλοῦνται τε τοῖς βασιλέων ἡσσαν, *The Priests minded the study of Philosophy and Astronomy, and conversed most with their Kings*: And after, speaking of their *Kings* being studied in their arts as well as others of the *Priests*, he adds, μεθ' ὧν ἦν αὐτοῖς πλεῖστον ὁ βίος, *with whom they spent most of their lives*. Agreeable to this *Plutarch* tells us, that the *Kings* themselves were often *Priests*; and adds out of *Hecataeus*, that the *Kings* used to drink wine by measure, ἱερεῖς ὄντες, *because they were Priests*; for as he saith, the *Kings* of *Egypt* were always chosen either out of the rank of *Priests* or *Souldiers*, τὰ μὲν δὲ ἀνδρείων, τὰ δὲ διὰ σοφίαν γένος ἀξίωμα καὶ πᾶσι ἔχοντο; *these two orders being of the greatest honour, the one for valour, and the other for wisdom*; and if the *King* were chosen out of the *Souldiers*, he was presently entred among the *Priests*, to learn their *mystical Sciences*. *Diodorus* indeed seems to reckon some great persons after the *Priests*, and distinct from the *Souldiery*; but if he means by these any other than some of the chief of the other two professions, I must say,

Sect. 7.

Geogr. l. 17.

De Isid. & Osir.

Lib. 1.

I say.

Not. in Strab.
l. 17.

Gen. 41. 45.

Serom. l. 5.

Herod. l. 2.
Diod. l. 1. c. 71.

J. I. c. App.

say as *Casaubon* doth in another case of *Diodorus*, *Sanè Strabonis auctoritas multis Siculis apud me praevalet*. *Diodorus* his testimony is not to be weighed with *Strabo's*. From hence we may understand the reason why that *Potiphera*, whose daughter *Joseph* married, is called כהן, which some render the *Priest*, others the *Prince of On*; but these two we see are very consistent, their *Priests* being their great *Princes*; and *Heliopolis*, or *On*, of which *Potipherah* was *Prince* or *Priest*, being the chief *Seat* and *University* of the *Priests* of *Egypt*. Now it is evident from *Clemens Alexandrinus*, that the *Egyptians* did not communicate their *mysteries* promiscuously to all, but only to such as were in *succession* to the *Crown*, or else to those of the *Priests* and their *Children*, who were most apt and fit for them, both by their *diet*, *instruction*, and *family*. For this was unalterably observed among them, that there was a *continued succession* of a *profession* in their *several families*, both of *Priests*, *Souldiers*, and *Husbandmen*, whereby they kept their *several orders* without any *mixture* or *confusion*, which is confessed both by *Herodotus* and *Diodorus*: So that by this constitution *Learning* was among them confined to the *Priests*, which highly advanceth the probability of that *tradition*, preserved among the *Egyptians* concerning *Moses* (which likewise strongly proves our present design) viz. *Manetho's Records*, as *Josephus* tells us, that *Moses* was one of the *Priests* at *Heliopolis*, and that his name among them was *Osarsiphus*, who changing his name, was called *Moses*; and in the time of *Amenophis* conducted the *leprous* people out of *Egypt* (so the *Egyptians* out of their hatred of the *Israelites* call them.) And *Charemon*, another *Egyptian Priest* in the same Author, calls *Moses* a *Scribe*, and *Joseph* (by whom probably he means *Joshua*) a *sacred Scribe*, and saith, that the *Egyptian* name of *Moses* was *Tisithen*, and of *Joseph* *Petseph*. Now this tradition did in all probability arise from the repute of *Moses* his *learning* and *wisdom*; which being among them proper to their *Priests*, they thence ascribed that name to him, although probably he might come to the *knowledge* of all their *mysteries*, from the *relation* he had to *Pharaoh's* daughter.

We

We come now to consider the parts of the *Egyptian Sect. 6.*
learning, in which the *Scripture* tells us *Moses* was skill'd :
 This by *Philo Judæus* is branched into *Arithmetick*, *Geometry*, *De vita Mosis.*
Musick, and *Hieroglyphical Philosophy* : But *Sixtus Senen-*
sis more comprehensively from *Diodorus*, *Diogenes Laerti-* *Bibliothec. l. 2.*
us, and others, divides it into four parts, *Mathematical*, *p. 39.*
Natural, *Divine*, and *Moral*. Their skill in the *Mathema-*
tical parts of learning hath been partly shewed already,
 and might be more largely from that skill in them, which
 the *Grecians* gained from the *Egyptians*, as both *Jamblichus*
 and *Porphyrie* speak of *Pythagoras*, that he gained his skill *Jambl. de vit.*
 in *Geometry* chiefly from the *Egyptians* : For these, as *Pyth. l. 1. 29.*
Porphyrie saith, of a long time had been very studious of *De vit. Pyth.*
Geometry, as the *Phenicians* of *Arithmetick*, and the *p. 182.*
Chaldeans of *Astronomy*. But *Jamblichus* (and I think de-
 servedly) takes notice of the τὸ δυσμεγέθυντον, the difficult
 access of the *Egyptian Priests*, especially as to acquain-
 tance with their mysteries; and so *Strabo* calls them *μυσ-* *Geogr. l. 17.*
τὰς καὶ δυσμεγέθυντους, such who concealed their learning under
 many symbols, and were not easily drawn to unfold it. And
 yet we might think the 22 years time which *Pythagoras* is
 thought to have spent among them, had been enough to
 have insinuated himself into their utmost acquaintance, and
 to have drawn from them the knowledge of their greatest
 mysteries ; but yet we have no great reason to think he
 did, if we believe the story in *Diogenes Laertius* of his
 sacrificing an *Hecatomb* for the finding out of that demon-
 stration, which is now contained in the 47 proposition of
 the first of *Euclide*. Yet this did not abate the *Grecians*
 esteem of the *Egyptians Mathematical Learning*; for in
Plato's time *Eudoxus Cnidius* went into *Egypt* on pur-
 pose to acquire it there; and *Democritus* his boast, that
 none of the *Arsapedonaptæ* in *Egypt* (so their Priests were
 called, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Eusebius* tell us, who
 relate the story) exceeded him in the *Mathematicks*, by
 which it may be at least inferred, that they were then in
 greatest esteem for them. Their great skill in *Astronomy* is
 attested by *Diodorus*, *Strabo*, *Herodotus*, and others, and
 by their finding out the course of the year by the motion of
 the.

Clem. Strom. l.
1. Euseb. Præ-
par. l. 10. c. 2.
Diod. l. 1. c. 49.
50. Strab. l. 17.

Herod. l. 2.

Strom. l. 6.
p. 631. Ed. Par.

the *Sun*, which was the invention of the *Heliopolitan Priests*. How much they valued *Geography*, appears from *Clemens* his description of the *ιεργαυματα*s, or *sacred Scribe* in the solemn procession; for he was required to be skilled in *Hieroglyphicks*, *Cosmography*, *Geography*, the motions of the *Planets*, the *Chorography* of *Egypt*, and description of the *Nile*. *Eustathius* in his notes on *Dionysius*, attributes the invention of *Geographical Tables* to *Sesostris*, who caused the Lands he had conquered to be described in *Tables*, and so communicated to the *Egyptians*, and from them to others. Their skill in *natural Philosophy* could not be very great, because of their *Magick* and *Superstition*, whereby they were hindered from all experiments in those natural things which they attributed a *Divinity* to; but they seem to have been more exact and curious in *natural history*; for, any *prodigies*, or any thing that was *Anomalous* in nature, they did, saith *Strabo*, φιλοπεγυμονεσεν ἀναγεῖν εἰς τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα, with a great deal of *curiosity* insert it in their *sacred records*, and *Herodotus* adds, that more things of that nature are observed by them than by any other *Nation*; which, saith he, they not only diligently preserve, but frequently compare together, and from a *similitude* of *prodigies* gather a *similitude* of events. But that which gained the *Egyptians* the greatest *repute* abroad, seems to have been their early skill in *Physick*, which is so much spoken of by *Homer*, *Plato*, *Herodotus*, *Plutarch*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and others, that it were impertinent troubling a *Readers* patience with the proof of that which is so generally confessed. A great evidence of the antiquity of this study among them is (if *Manetho* may be so far credited) that *Athothis* the second King of the first *Dynasty* of the *Thinites*, was a *Physician* himself, and writ some Books of *Anatomy*; and the second King of the third *Dynastie* of the *Memphites*, was for his skill in *Physick* honoured among them by the name of *Æsculapius*. *Pliny* affirms it to have been the custom of their *Kings* to cause dead bodies to be dissected, to find out the nature of diseases; and elsewhere tells us, that the original of *Physick* among them was from the relations of those who by any remedy were cured of any disease, which for a *memo-*

Natur. hist.
lib. 19. c. 5.
l. 29. c. 1.

rial

rial to posterity were recorded in their *Temples*. Their *Hieroglyphical* and *mystical Learning* hath made the greatest noise in the world, and hath the least of *substance* in it; which whoever will not be convinced of without perusal of *Kerchers Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, will at last find it fully done to his hand by the succesless endeavours of that otherwise learned man. I cannot think any rational man could think that study worth his pains, which at the highest can amount but to a conjecture; and when it is come to that with a great deal of pains, it is nothing but some ordinary and trivial observation. As in that famous *Hieroglyphick* of *Diospolis*, so much spoken of by the Ancients, where was a *Child* to express *coming into the world*, an *old man* for *going out of it*, an *Hawk* for *God*, an *Hippopotamus* for *hatred*, and a *Crocodile* for *impudence*, and all to express this venerable *Apothegm*, *O ye that come into the world, and that go out of it, God hates impudence*. And therefore certainly this kind of *Learning* deserves the highest form among the *difficiles Nuga*, and all these *Hieroglyphicks* put together, will make but one good one, and that should be for *Labour lost*.

There is yet one *part* of *Learning* more among them, *Seet. 7.* which the *Agyptians* are esteemed for, which is the *Political* and civil part of it, which may better be called *wisdom* than most of the fore going. Two things speak much the *wisdom* of a Nation; *good Laws*, and a *prudent management* of them: their *Laws* are highly commended by *Strabo* and *Diodorus*; and it is none of the least commendations of them, that *Solon* and *Lycurgus* borrowed so many of their constitutions from them; and for the *prudent management* of their government, as the continuance of their *state* so long in peace and quietness, is an invincible demonstration of it; so the report given of them in *Scripture* adds a further *testimony* to it; for therein the King of *Agypt* is called the *Son of the wise*, as well as the *Son of antient Kings*; and his *Counsellors* are called *wise Counsellors* of Pharaoh, and the *wise men*; whereby a more than ordinary prudence and policy must be understood. Can we now imagine such a person as *Moses* was, bred up in all the *ingenuous Literature* of *Agypt*, conversant among their *wisest persons* in Pharaohs

Iſa. 19. 11, 12,

raahs Court, having thereby all advantages to improve himself, and to understand the utmost of all that they knew, should not be able to pass a judgement between a meer pretence and imposture, and real and important Truths? Can we think that one who had interest in so great a Court, all advantages of raising himself therein, should willingly forsake all the pleasures and delights at present, all his hopes and advantages for the future, were he not fully perswaded of the certain and undoubted truth of all those things which are recorded in his Books? Is it possible a man of ordinary wisdom should venture himself upon so hazardous, unlikely and dangerous employment, as that was Moses undertook, which could have no probability of success, but only upon the belief that that God who appeared unto him, was greater than all the Gods of Egypt, and could carry on his own design by his own power, maugre all the opposition which the Princes of the world could make against it? And what possible ground can we have to think that such a person who did verily believe the truth of what God revealed unto him, should dare to write any otherwise than as it was revealed unto him? If there had been any thing repugnant to common reason in the history of the Creation, the fall of man, the universal deluge, the propagation of the world by the sons of Noah, the history of the Patriarchs, had not Moses rational faculties as well as we? nay, had he them not far better improved than any of ours are? and was not he then able to judge what was sutable to reason, and what not? and can we think he would deliver any thing inconsistent with reason or undoubted tradition then, when the Egyptian Priests might so readily and plainly have triumphed over him, by discovering the falshood of what he wrote? Thus we see that Moses was as highly qualified as any of the acutest Heathen Philosophers could be, for discerning truth from falshood; nay, in all probability he far excelled the most renowned of the Grecian Philosophers in that very kind of learning wherewith they made so great a noise in the world, which was originally Egyptian, as is evident in the whole series of the Grecian Philosophers, who went age after age to Egypt to get some scraps of that learning there, which

Moses

Moses could not have but full meals of, because of his high place, great interest, and power in *Agypt*. And must those hungry *Philosophers* then become the only *Masters* of our reason, and their *dictates* be received as the sense and voice of nature, which they either received from uncertain tradition, or else delivered in opposition to it, that they might be more taken notice of in the world? Must an *αὐτὸς ἔφα* be confronted with *Thus saith the Lord*? and a few pitiful symbols vye authority with divine commands? and *Ex nihilo nihil* fit be sooner believed than *In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*? What irrefragable evidence of reason is that so confident a presumption built upon, when it can signify nothing without this hypothesis, that there is nothing but matter in the world? and let this first be proved, and we will never stick to grant the other. I may confidently say the great gullery of the world hath been, taking philosophical *dictates* for the standard of reason, and unproved hypotheses for certain foundations for our discourse to rely upon. And the seeking to reconcile the mysteries of our faith to these, hath been that which hath almost destroyed it, and turned our Religion into a meer philosophical speculation. But of this elsewhere. We see then that insisting merely on the accomplishment and rational perfections of the persons who speak, we have more reason to yield credit to *Moses* in his history, than to any *Philosophers* in their speculations.

And that which in the next place speaks *Moses* to be a person of wisdom, and judgement, and ability to find out truth, was his age and experience when he delivered these things to the world. He vented no crude and indigested conceptions, no sudden and temerarious fancies, the usual issues of teeming and juvenile wits; he lived long enough to have experience to try, and judgement to distinguish a meer outside and varnish, from what was solid and substantial. We cannot then have the least ground of suspicion, that *Moses* was any wayes unfit to discern truth from falsehood, and therefore was capable of judging the one from the other.

But though persons be never so highly accomplished for parts, learning, and experience, yet if they want due information of the certainty of the things they deliver, they may

be still *deceived themselves*; and if they preserve it for posterity, be guilty of *deceiving others*. Let us now therefore see whether *Moses* had not as great *advantages* for understanding the truth of his *History*, as he had judgement to discern it. And concerning all those things contained in the *four last books* of his, to his own death, it was impossible any should have greater than himself, writing nothing but what he was *pars magna* himself of, what he saw, and heard, and did; and can any testimony be desired greater than his whose actions they were, or who was present at the doing of them, and that not in any *private way*; but in the most *publick capacity*? For although private persons may be present at great actions, yet they may be guilty of misrepresenting them, for want of understanding all circumstances *precedent*, and *subsequent*, or for want of understanding the *designs* of the chief *instruments* of action: but when the *person* himself, who was the *chief* in all, shall undertake to write an exact *History* of it, what evidence can be desired more certain than that is, that there could be no defect as to information concerning what was done? The only scruple then that can be made, must be concerning the *passages* of former times which *Moses* relates. And here I doubt not but to make it appear, that insisting only on all that can be desired in a *bare Historian* (setting aside *Divine revelation*) he had as *true* and *certain information* of the *History* of those former ages, as any one can have of things at that distance from themselves; and that is by a *certain uninterrupted tradition* of them, which will appear more clear and evident in that Nation of which *Moses* was, than in any other Nation in the world: And that on these *two accounts*: First, *The undoubted lineal descent from Father to Son in the Jewish Nation*. Secondly, *Their interest lying so much in the preserving this tradition entire*.

Scct. 9.

First, *That there was a certain unmixed lineal descent from Father to Son in the Jewish Nation*: the great cause of most of the confusion in the tradition of other Nations, was the frequent mixing of several families one with another; now that God might as it were on purpose satisfy the world of the *Israelites capacity* to preserve the *tradition entire*, he
pro.

prohibited their *mixture* by marriages with the people of other Nations and families. So that in *Moses* his time it was a very easie matter to run up their lineal descent as far as the *flood*, nay up to *Adam*: for *Adam* conversed sometime with *Lamech* *Noahs* Father; for *Lamech* was born *A. M.* 874. *Adam* dyed 930. so that 56 years according to that computation were *Adam* and *Lamech* co-temporary. Can we then think *Noah* ignorant of the ancient tradition of the world when his *Father* was so long *coavous* with *Adam*; and *Mathusela* his *Grandfather* who was born *A. M.* 687. dyed not till *A. M.* 1656. according to our most learned *Primate of Armagh*, i. e. was 600 years co-temporary with *Noah*. *Sem* his Son was probably living in some part of *Jacobs* time, or *Isaac's* at least; and how easily and uninterruptedly might the general tradition of the ancient History be continued thence to the time of *Moses*, when the number of families agreeing in this tradition was increased, and withal incorporated by a common ligament of Religion? I demand then, where can we suppose any ignorance or cutting off this general tradition in so continued a succession as here was? Can we imagine that the *Grand-children* of *Jacob* could be ignorant of their own pedigree, and whence they came into *Egypt*? can we think a thing so late and so remarkable as the account of their coming thither, should be forgotten, which was attended with so many memorable circumstances, especially the selling and advancement of *Joseph*, whose memory it was impossible should be obliterated in so short a time? Could *Jacob* be ignorant of the *Countrey* whence his *Grand-father Abraham* came? especially when he lived so long in it himself, and married into that branch of the family that was remaining there, when he had served his *Uncle Laban*? Could *Abraham* when he was co-temporary with *Sem*, be ignorant of the truth of the *flood*, when *Sem* from whom he derived himself, was one of the persons who escaped it in the *Ark*? Could *Sem* be ignorant of the actions before the *flood*, when *Adam* the first man, lived so near the time of *Noah*, and could *Noah* then be ignorant of the *Creation*, and the fall of man? Thus we see it almost impossible, that any age among them then could be ignorant of the passages of the prece-

dent, which they were so few *Generations* removed from, that they could with ease derive themselves from the *first man*. What then can we say? that any of these had a design of *deceiving* their posterity, and so corrupted the tradition? but besides, that it could be hardly possible at that time, when there were so many remaining *testimonies* of former times; what end can we imagine that any Parents should have in thus *deceiving* their Children, or what advantage should come to them by such a deceit? Nay, I shall now manifest in the second place, that the whole interest of their children lay in preserving this tradition certain and entire. For their hopes of possessing *Canaan* and title to it, depended upon the promise made to *Abraham* 400 years before; which would not only keep awake their sense of *Divine Providence*, but would make them careful during their bondage to preserve their *Genealogies*, because all the right they could plead to their possessions in *Canaan*, was from their being of *Abrahams* seed. And besides this, on purpose to be a memorial to them of passages between God and *Abraham*, they had in their flesh a badge of *circumcision*, which would serve to call to mind those transactions which had been between God and their fore-fathers. These things then do fully demonstrate, that insisting only on rational evidence, the *Israelites* were the most certain conservators of the ancient History of the world; and can we then think, that *Moses* who was the Ruler among them, should not fully understand those things which every *Israelite* could scarce be ignorant of, and might correct the mistakes of *Moses* in his History, if he had been guilty of any such? These things I suppose have made the first proposition evident, that it was morally impossible *Moses* should be deceived himself, or be ignorant of the things which he reports to others, both because he had abilities sufficient to discover truth from falsehood, and sufficient information of the passages of former times.

CHAP. III.

Moses his fidelity and integrity proved.

Moses considered as an *Historian*, and as a *Law-giver*; his fidelity in both proved: clear evidences that he had no intent to deceive in his *History*, freedom from private interest, impartiality in his relations, plainness and perspicuity of style. As a *Law-giver*, he came armed with *Divine authority*, which being the main thing, is fixed on to be fully proved from his actions and writings. The power of miracles the great evidence of *Divine revelation*. Two grand questions propounded. In what cases miracles may be expected, and how known to be true. No necessity of a constant power of miracles in a Church: Two Cases alone wherein they may be expected. When any thing comes as a *Law from God*, and when a *Divine Law* is to be repealed. The necessity of miracles in those cases as an evidence of *Divine revelation* asserted. Objections answered. No use of miracles when the doctrine is settled and owned by miracles in the first revelation. No need of miracles in reformation of a Church.

THE second proposition contains the proof of *Moses* his fidelity, that he was as far from having any intent to deceive others, as he was from being deceived himself. Two ways *Moses* must be considered, as an *Historian*, and as a *Law-giver*; the only inducement for him to deceive as an *Historian*, must be some particular interest which must draw him aside from an impartial delivery of the truth; as a *Law-giver* he might deceive, if he pretended *Divine revelation* for those *Laws* which were only the issues of his own brain, that they might be received with a greater veneration among the people, as *Numa Pompilius* and others did. Now if we prove that *Moses* had no interest to deceive in his *History*, and had all rational evidence of *Divine revelation* in his *Laws*, we shall abundantly evince the undoubted fidelity

Sect. I.

fidelity of Moses in every thing recorded by him. We begin then with his fidelity as an Historian ; and it being contrary to the common interest of the world to deceive and be deceived, we have no reason to entertain any suspicions of the veracity of any where person we cannot discern some peculiar interest that might have a stronger bias upon him than the common interest of the world. For it is otherwise in morals than in naturals ; for in naturals, we see that every thing will leave its proper interest to preserve the common interest of nature ; but in morals, there is nothing more common than deserting the common interest of mankind, to set up a peculiar interest against it : It being the truest description of a Politician, that he is one who makes himself the centre, and the whole world his circumference ; that he regards not how much the whole world is abused, if any advantage doth accrue to himself by it. Where we see it then the design of any person to advance himself or his posterity, or to set up the credit of the Nation whose History he writes, we may have just cause to suspect his partiality, because we then find a sufficient inducement for such a one to leave the common road of truth, and to fall into the paths of deceit. But we have not the least ground to suspect any such partiality in the History of Moses ; for nothing is more clear than that he was free from the ambitious design of advancing himself and his posterity, who notwithstanding the great honour he enjoyed himself, was content to leave his posterity in the meanest sort of attendance upon the Tabernacle. And as little have we ground to think he intended to flatter that Nation, which he so lively describes, that one would think he had rather a design to set forth the forwardness, unbelief, unthankfulness, and disobedience of a Nation towards a Gracious God, than any wayes to inbalance their reputation in the world, or to ingratiate himself with them by writing this History of them. Nay, and he sets forth so exactly the lesser failings and grosser enormities of all the Ancestors of this Nation whose acts he records, that any impartial Reader will soon acquit him of a design of flattery, when after he hath recorded those faults, he seeks not to extenuate them, or bring any excuse or pretence to palliate them. So that

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any observing reader may easily take notice, that he was carried on by a higher design than the common people of *Historians* are; and that his drift and scope was to exalt the goodness and favour of God, towards a rebellious and obstinate people. Of which there can be no greater nor more lively demonstration, than the *History* of all the transactions of the Jewish Nation, from their coming forth of *Egypt* to their utter ruine and desolation. And *Moses* tells them as from God himself, it was neither for their number, nor their goodness, that God set his Love upon them, but he loved them, because he loved them; i. e. no other account was to be given of his gracious dealing with them, but the freeness of his own bounty, and the exuberancy of his goodness towards them. Nay, have we not cause to admire the ingenuity as well as veracity of this excellent personage, who not only lays so notorious a blot upon the stock of his own family *Levi*, recording so punctually the inhumanity and cruelty of him and *Simeon* in their dealings with the *Sechemites*; but likewise inserts that curse which was left upon their memory for it by their own Father at his decease! And that he might not leave the least suspicion of partiality behind him, he hath not done as the statuary did, (who engraved his own name so artificially in the statue of *Jupiter*, that one should continue as long as the other,) but what the other intended for the praise of his skill, *Moses* hath done for his ingenuity, that he hath so interwoven the *History* of his own failings and disobedience with those of the Nation, that his spots are like to continue as long as the whole web of his *History* is like to do. Had it been the least part of his design to have his memory preserved with a superstitious veneration among the *Jews*, how easie had it been for him to have left out any thing that might in the least entrench upon his reputation? but we find him very secure and careless in that particular; nay, on the other side, very studious and industrious in depressing the honour and deserts of men, and advancing the power and goodness of God. And all this he doth, not in an affected strain of Rhetorick, whose proper work is *impetrare fidem mendacio*, and as *Tully* somewhere confesseth, to make things seem otherwise than they are, but

Deut. 7. 7, 8.

Gen. 34. 25.

Gen. 49. 5, 6, 7.

with that *innate simplicity* and *plainness*, and yet withal with that *Imperatoria brevitās*, that *Majesty* and *authority*, that it is thereby evident he sought not to *court acceptance*, but to *demand belief*: Nor had any such pitiful design of pleasing his Readers with some *affected phrases*, but thought that *Truth* it self had *presence* enough with it, to *command the submission* of our *understandings* to it.

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Especially when all these were delivered by such a one who came sufficiently armed with all *motives of credibility* and *inducements to assent*, by that *evidence* which he gave, that he was no *pretender to divine revelation*, but was really employed as a *peculiar instrument of State* under the *God* and *Ruler of the whole world*. Which if it be made clear, then all our further doubts must presently cease, and all impertinent disputes be silenced, when the *supream Majesty* appears *impowering* any person to *dictate* to the world the *Laws* they must be governed by. For if any thing be repugnant to our *rational faculties*, that is, that *God* should *dictate* any thing but what is most *certainly true*, or that the *Governor* of the world should *prescribe* any *Laws*, but such as were most *just* and *reasonable*. If we suppose a *God*, we cannot question *veracity* to be one of his chiefest *Attributes*, and that it is *impossible* the *God of truth* should employ any, to *reveal* any thing as from him, but what was *undoubtedly true*. So that it were an argument of the most gross and unreasonable *incredulity*, to *distrust* the *certainty* of any thing which comes to us with sufficient *evidence of divine revelation*, because thereby we shew our *distrust* of the *veracity* of *God himself*. All that we can desire then, is only *reasonable satisfaction* concerning the evidence of *Divine revelation* in the person whose words we are to credit, and this our *Gracious God* hath been so far from denying men, that he hath given all *rational evidence* of the truth of it. For it implying no *incongruity* at all, to any *notions of God* or *ourselves*, that *God* should, when it pleases him, single out some *instrument* to manifest his will to the world; our enquiry then leads us to *those things* which may be proper *notes and characters* of such a person who is employed on so high an *Embassy*. And those are chiefly these two, if his *actions* be
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such as could not flow from the power of meer natural causes ; and if the things he reveals be such as could not proceed from any created understanding. First then, for his actions, these striking most upon our outward senses, when they are any thing extraordinary, do transmit along with the impressions of them to the understanding, an high opinion of the person that does them: Whereas the meer height of knowledge, or profoundness of things discovered, can have no such present power and influence upon any, but such as are of more raised and inquisitive minds. And the world is generally more apt to suspect it self deceived with words, than it can be with actions ; and hence Miracles, or the doing of things above the reach of nature, hath been always embraced as the greatest testimony of Divine authority and revelation. For which there is this evident reason, that the course of nature being settled by divine power, and every thing acting there by the force of that power it received at first, it seems impossible that any thing should really alter the series of things, without the same power which at first produced them. This then we take for granted, that wherever such a power appears, there is a certain evidence of a Divine presence going along with such a person who enjoys it. And this is that which is most evident in the actions of Moses, both as to the Miracles he wrought both in Egypt and the Wilderness, and his miraculous deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt, this later being as much above the reach of any merely civil power, as the other above natural.

We therefore come to the rational evidence of that divine authority whereby Moses acted ; which may be gathered from that divine power which appeared in his actions ; which being a matter of so great weight and importance (it being one of the main bases whereon the evidence of divine revelation, as to us, doth stand) and withal of so great difficulty and obscurity, (caused through the preferring some parties in Religion, above the common interest of it) it will require more care and diligence to search what influence the power of Miracles hath upon the proving the Divine Commission of those who do them. Whether they are such undoubted credentials, that wherever they are produced, we are pre-

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sently to receive the persons who bring them, as extraordinary *Embassadours* from heaven, employed on some peculiar message to the sons of men? For the full stating of this important question, two things must be cleared; First, *In what cases miracles may be expected as credentials to confirm an immediate commission from Heaven?* Secondly, *What rational evidences do attend those miracles, to assure us they are such as they pretend to be?*

First, For the cases wherein these miracles are to be expected as inducements to, or confirmations of our faith, concerning the Divine imployment of any persons in the world. And here I lay down this as a certain foundation, that a power of miracles is not constantly and perpetually necessary in all those who manage the affairs of Heaven here on earth, or that act in the name of God in the world. When the doctrine of faith is once settled in sacred records, and the divine revelation of that doctrine sufficiently attested, by a power of miracles in the revealers of it, What imaginable necessity or pretext can there be contrived for a power of miracles, especially among such as already own the Divine revelation of the Scriptures? To make then a power of working miracles to be constantly resident in the Church of God, as one of the necessary notes and characters of it, is to put God upon that necessity which common nature is freed from, viz. of multiplying things without sufficient cause to be given for them; and to leave mens faith at a stand, when God hath given sufficient testimony for it to rely upon. It is a thing too common and easie to be observed, that some persons out of their eagerness to uphold the interest of their own party, have been fain to establish it upon such grounds, which when they are sufficiently searched to the bottom, do apparently undermine the common and sure foundations whereon the belief of our common Christianity doth mainly stand. It were easie to make a large discourse on this subject, whereby we may rip open the wounds that Christianity hath received, through the contentions of the several parties of it; but this imputation cannot with so much reason be fastned on any party, as that which is nailed to a pretended infallible chair; for which we need no other instance, than this before.

before us. For while the leaders of that party make a *power of miracles* to be a necessary note of the true Church, they unavoidably run men upon this dangerous precipice, not to believe any thing as a matter of faith, where they find not sufficient *miracles* to convince them that it is the true Church which propounds it to them. Which necessarily follows from their acknowledged principles; for it being impossible according to them, to believe any thing with a *divine faith*, but what is propounded by the Church as an *infallible* guide; and it being impossible to know which is this *infallible* guide, but by the *notes* and *Characters* of it, and one of those *notes*, being a *power of miracles*, I cannot find out my *guide* but by this *power*; and this *power* must be present in the Church, (for nothing of former ages concerning faith, as the *Miracles of Christ*, his *resurrection*, &c. is to be believed, but on the Churches account) and therefore where men do not find sufficient *conviction* from *present miracles*, to believe the Church to be an *infallible* guide, they must throw off all faith concerning the *Gospel*; for as good never a whit, as never the better. And therefore it is no wonder *Atheism* should be so *thriving* a plant in *Italy*, nay under, if not within the walls of *Rome* it self, where inquisitive persons do daily see the *jugglings* and *impostures* of *Priests* in their pretended miracles, and from thence are brought to look upon Religion it self as a meer imposture, and to think no *Pope* so *infallible* as he that said, *Quantum nobis profuit hac de Christo fabula?* Such horrid consequences do men drive others, if not bring themselves to, when they employ their parts and industry rather to uphold a *corrupt interest*, than to promote the belief of the acknowledged principles of Christian faith. But as long as we assert no *necessity* of such a *power of miracles* to be the note of any true Church, nor any such *necessity* of an *infallible* guide, but that the *miracles* wrought by *Christ* and his *Apostles*, were sufficient evidences of a *divine spirit* in them; and that the *Scriptures* were recorded by them to be an *infallible* rule of faith, here we have more clear reason as to the primary motives and grounds of faith, and withal the *infallible veracity* of *God* in the *Scriptures*, as the last resolution of faith. And while we

assert such an *infallible rule of faith*, delivered to us by such an unanimous consent from the first delivery of it, and then so fully *attested* by such *uncontroulable miracles*, we cannot in the least understand to what end a power of miracles should now serve in the *Church*, especially among those who all believe the Scriptures to be the *Word of God*. Indeed before the great *harvest of Converts* in the *primitive times* were brought in, both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and the *Church* fully settled in receiving the *Canon* of the *Scriptures* universally, we find *God* did continue this power among them; but after the *books* of the *New Testament* were generally embraced as the rule of faith among *Christians*, we find them so far from pretending to any such power, that they reject the pretenders to it, such as the *Donatists* were, and plead upon the same accounts as we do now against the *necessity* of it. We see then no reason in the world for *miracles* to be continued where the doctrine of faith is settled, as being confirmed by *miracles* in the first Preachers of it.

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There are only these *two cases* then, wherein *miracles* may justly and with reason be expected. First, *when any person comes as by an extraordinary commission from God to the world, either to deliver some peculiar message, or to do some more than ordinary service.* Secondly, *When something that hath been before established by Divine Law, is to be repealed, and some other way of worship established instead of it.* First, *When any comes upon an extraordinary message to the world, in the name of, and by commission from God, then it is but reason to require some more than ordinary evidence of such authority.* Because of the main importance of the duty of giving credit to such a person, and the great sin of being guilty of rejecting that divine authority which appears in him. And in this case we cannot think that *God* would require it as a *duty* to believe, where he doth not give sufficient *arguments* for *faith*, nor that he will punish persons for such a fault, which an *invincible ignorance* was the cause of. Indeed *God* doth not use to *necessitate* faith, as to the act of it, but he doth so clearly *propound* the *object* of it, with all arguments inducing to it, as may sufficiently justify a *Believer's choice* in point of *reason* and *prudence*, and may leave all

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unbelievers without excuse. I cannot see what account a man can give to himself of his faith, much less what *Apology* he can make to others for it, unless he be sufficiently convinced, in point of the *highest reason*, that it was his *duty* to believe; and in order to that *conviction*, there must be some clear *evidence* given, that what is spoken hath the *impress* of *Divine authority* upon it. Now what convictions there can be to any sober mind concerning *Divine authority* in any person without such a *power* of *miracles* going along with him, when he is to deliver some *new doctrine* to the world to be believed, I confess I cannot understand. For although I doubt not but where ever *God* doth reveal any thing to any person immediately, he gives *demonstrable evidence* to the inward *senses* of the *soul*, that it comes from himself; yet this *inward sense* can be no *ground* to another person to believe his *doctrine* *divine*, because no man can be a *competent judge* of the *actings* of another's *senses*; and it is impossible to another person to distinguish the *actings* of the *divine Spirit* from strong *impressions* of *fancy* by the *force* and *energy* of them. If it be said, that we are bound to believe those, who say they are fully satisfied of the *Divine Commission*. I answer, *First*, this will expose us to all *delusions* imaginable; for if we are bound to believe them because they say so, we are bound to believe all which say so; and none are more confident pretenders to this than the greatest deceivers, as the experience of our age will sufficiently witness. *Secondly*, Men must necessarily be bound to believe *contradictions*; for nothing more ordinary, than for such confident pretenders to a *Divine Spirit*, to *contradict* one another, and it may be, the same person in a little time *contradict* himself: and must we still be bound to believe all they say? If so, no *Philosophers* would be so much in request, as those *Aristotle* disputes against in his *Metaphysics*, who thought a thing might be, and not be, at the same time. *Thirdly*, The ground of faith at last will be but a meer *humane testimony*, as far as the person who is to believe is capable of judging of it. For the *Question* being, Whether the person I am to believe hath *divine authority* for what he saith, What ground can I have to believe that he hath so? Must I take his bare *affirmation* for

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for it? If so, then a meer humane testimony must be the ground of *divine faith*, and that which it is last resolved into; if it be said, that *I am to believe the divine authority by which he speaks, when he speaks in the name of God*: I answer, the question will return again, how I shall know he speaks this from *divine authority*? and so there must be a progress in *infinitum*, or founding *divine faith* on a meer humane testimony, if I am to believe *divine revelation* meerly on the account of the persons affirmation who pretends unto it. For in this case it holds good, *non apparentis & non existentis eadem est ratio*; if he be divinely inspired, and there be no ground inducing me to believe that he is so, I shall be excused, if I believe him not, if my wilfulness and laziness be not the cause of my unbelief.

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If it be said that *God will satisfy the minds of good men concerning the truth of divine revelation*, I grant it to be wonderfully true; but all the question is *de modo*, how God will satisfy them? whether meerly by inspiration of his own spirit in them, assuring them that it is *God* that speaks in such persons; or by giving them *rational evidence*, convincing them of sufficient grounds to believe it. If we assert the former way, we run into these inconveniences; First, we make as *immediate a revelation* in all those who believe, as in those who are to *reveal divine truths* to us; for there is a new revelation of an *object* immediately to the mind; viz. that *such a person is inspired of God*; and so is not after the common way of the *Spirits illumination* in *Believers*, which is by *inlightning the faculty*, without the *proposition* of any new *object*, as it is in the *work of Grace*: So that according to this opinion, there must be *immediate inspiration* as to that *act of faith*, whereby we believe any one to have been *divinely inspired*, and consequently to that whereby we believe the *Scriptures to be the Word of God*. Secondly, Doth not this make the fairest plea for mens *unbelief*? For I demand, Is it the duty of those who want that *immediate illumination* to believe or no? If it be not their duty, *unbelief* can be no *sin* to them; if it be a *duty*, it must be made known to be a *duty*; and how can that be made known to them to be a *duty*, when they want the only and necessary means of

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instruction in order to it? Will *God* condemn them for that, which it was *impossible* they should have, unless *God* gave it them? And how can they be left *inexcusable*, who want so much as *rational inducements* to faith? for of these I now speak, and not of *efficacious perswasions* of the mind, when there are *rational arguments* for *faith propounded*. But lastly, I suppose the case will be cleared, when we take notice what course *God* hath always taken to give all *rational satisfaction* to the *minds* of *men*, concerning the persons whom he hath employed in either of the fore-mentioned cases. First, for those who have been employed upon some special message and service for *God*, he hath sent them forth sufficiently provided with manifestations of the *Divine power* whereby they acted, as is most clear and evident in the present case of *Moses*, *Exodus* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. where *Moses* puts the case to *God*, which we are now debating of. Supposing, saith he, that I should go to the *Israelites* and tell them, *God* had appeared to me, and sent me to deliver them, and they should say *God* had not appeared unto me, how should I satisfy them? *God* doth not reject this objection of *Moses* as favouring of *unbelief*, but presently shews him how he should satisfy them, by causing a *miracle* before his face, turning his rod into a *Serpent*; and *God* gives this as the reason of it, *vers.* 5. That they may believe that the Lord *God* of their Fathers, the *God* of *Abraham*, the *God* of *Isaac*, the *God* of *Jacob*, hath appeared unto thee. It seems *God* himself thought this would be the most pregnant evidence of *Gods* appearing to him, if he wrought *miracles* before their faces. Nay, lest they should think one single miracle was not sufficient, *God* in the immediate following verses adjoyns two more, which he should do in order to their satisfaction; and further, *vers.* 21. *God* gave him a charge to do all those wonders before *Pharaoh*, which he had put into his hand: And accordingly we find *Pharaoh* presently demanding a miracle of *Moses*, *Exodus* 7. 9. which accordingly *Moses* did in his presence, though he might suppose *Pharaohs* demand not to proceed from desire of satisfaction, but from some hopes that for want of it, he might have rendred his credit suspected among the *Israelites*.

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Deut. 13. 1, 2,
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Indeed after *God* had delivered his people, and had settled them in a way of serving him according to the *Laws* delivered by *Moses*, which he had confirmed by unquestionable *miracles* among them, we find a *caution* laid in by *Moses* himself, against those which should pretend signs and wonders to draw them off from the Religion established by the *Law of Moses*. And so likewise under the *Gospel*, after that was established by the *unparallel'd miracles* of our *Saviour* and his *Apostles*, we find frequent *cautions* against being deceived by those who came with pretences of doing great *miracles*. But this is so far from infringing the *credibility* of such a *Testimony* which is confirmed by *miracles*, that it yields a strong confirmation to the truth of what I now assert. For the *doctrine* is supposed to be already established by *miracles*, according to which we are to judge of the *spirits* of such *pretenders*. Now it stands to the greatest reason, that when a *Religion* is once established by uncontroverted *miracles*, we should not hearken to every whiffling *Conjuror* that will pretend to do great feats, to draw us off from the truth established. In which case, the surest way to discover the *imposture*, is to compare his pretended *miracles* with those *true* and *real* ones which were done by *Moses* and *Christ*; and the ground of it is, because every person is no competent *judge* of the truth of a *miracle*; for the *Devil* by his power and subtilty, may easily deceive all such as will be led by the nose by him, in expectation of some wonders to be done by him. And therefore as long as we have no ground to question the *certainty* of those *miracles* which were wrought by *Christ* or *Moses*, I am bound to adhere to the *doctrine* established by those *miracles*, and to make them my rule of judging all persons who shall pretend to work *miracles*: Because, 1. I do not know how far *God* may give men over to be deceived by *lying wonders*, who will not receive the truth in the love of it, i. e. those that think not the *Christian Religion* sufficiently confirmed by the *miracles* wrought at the first *promulgation* of it. *God* in *justice* may permit the *Devil* to go further than otherwise he could, and leave such persons to their own credulity, to believe every *imposture* and *illusion* of their senses for

true.

true miracles. 2. That *doctrine* which was confirmed by undoubted *miracles*, hath assured us of the coming of *lying wonders*, whereby many should be *deceived*. Now this part of the doctrine of the *Gospel* is as certainly true as any of the rest; for it was confirmed by the same *miracles* that the other was; and besides that, the very coming of such *miracles* is an evidence of the truth of it, it falling out so exactly according to what was foretold so many hundred years since. Now if this *doctrine* be true, then am I certain the intent of these *miracles* is to *deceive*, and that those are deceived who hearken to them; and what reason then have I to believe them? 3. To what end do these miracles serve? Are they to confirm the *truths* contained in *Scripture*? But what need they any confirmation now, when we are assured by the *miracles* wrought by *Christ* and his *Apostles*, that the doctrine by them preached came from *God*? and so hath been received upon the credit of those miracles ever since. Were these truths sufficiently proved to be from *God* before or no? If *not*, then all former ages have believed without sufficient ground for faith; if they were, then what ground can there be to confirm us in them now? certainly *God*, who never doth any thing but for very great purposes, will never alter the *course* of nature, meerly for satisfaction of mens *vain curiosities*.

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But it may be it will be said, *It was something not fully revealed in Scripture which is thus confirmed by miracles*: but where hath the *Scripture* told us, that any thing not fully revealed therein, should be afterwards confirmed? Was the *Scripture* an infallible rule of faith while this was wanting in it? Did *Christ* and his *Apostles* discharge their places, when they left something unrevealed to us? Was this a duty before these miracles, or no? if it was, what need miracles to confirm it? if *not*, *Christ* hath not told us all necessary conditions of salvation. For whatever is required as a duty, is such as the neglect of it runs men upon damnation. Lastly, mens faith will be left at continual uncertainties; for we know not according to this principle, when we have all that is necessary to be believed, or do all that is necessary to be practised in order to salvation. For if *God* may still

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make new *articles of faith*, or constitute new *duties* by fresh *miracles*, I must go and enquire what *miracles* are wrought in every place, to see that I miss nothing that may be *necessary* for me, in order to my happiness in another world.

If men pretend to deliver any doctrine *contrary* to the *Scripture*; then it is not only *necessary* that they confirm it by *miracles*, but they must manifest the *falseity* of those *miracles* on which that doctrine is believed, or else they must use another miracle to prove that *God* will set his seal to confirm both parts of a *contradiction* to be true. Which being the *hardest task* of all, had need be proved by very *sufficient* and *undoubted miracles*, such as may be able to make us believe those are *miracles*, and are *not*, at the same time, and so the *strength* of the argument is utterly destroyed by the *medium* produced to prove it by.

By this discourse these two things are clear; First, that no pretences of miracles are to be hearkned to, when the doctrine we are to believe is already established by them, if those miracles tend in the least to the derogation of the truth of what was established by those former miracles. Secondly, that when the full doctrine we are to believe is established by miracles, there is no necessity at all of new miracles, for confirmation of any of the truths therein delivered. And therefore it is a most unreasonable thing to demand miracles of those to prove the truth of the doctrine they deliver, who do first solemnly profess to deliver nothing but what was confirmed by miracles in the first delivery of it, and is contained in the *Scriptures* of the *Old and New Testament*, and secondly do not pretend to any immediate Commission from heaven, but do nothing but what in their consciences they think every true *Christian* is bound to do; much more all *Magistrates* and *Ministers* who believe the truth of what they profess, which is in their places to reform all errors and abuses which are crept into the doctrine or practice of *Christianity*, through the corruption of men or times. And therefore it is a most unjust and unreasonable demand of the *Papists*, when they require miracles from our first reformers, to prove the truth of their doctrine with. Had they pretended to have come with an

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immediate commission from heaven to have added to the Doctrine of the Gospel, there had been some plea for such a demand; but it was quite otherwise with them: Their only design was to whip the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, to purge the Church from its abuses: And although that by Jerome was thought to be one of our Saviours greatest miracles, yet this by us is conceived to be no other than the duty of all Magistrates, Ministers, and private Christians; these by their Prayers, Ministers by their doctrine, and Magistrates by their just authority.

CHAP. IV.

The fidelity of the Prophets succeeding Moses.

An order of Prophets to succeed Moses, by Gods own appointment in the Law of Moses. The Schools of the Prophets, the original and institution of them. The Cities of the Levites. The occasion of their first institution. The places of the Schools of the Prophets, and the tendency of the institution there to a Prophetical office. Of the Musick used in the Schools of the Prophets. The Roman Assamenta, and the Greek Hymns in their solemn worship. The two sorts of Prophets among the Jews, Lieger and extraordinary. Ordinary Prophets taken out of the Schools, proved by Amos and Saul.

BUT although now under the Gospel (the revelation of Sect. 1.
Gods will being compleated by Christ and his Apostles)
we have no reason either to expect new Revelations , or
new miracles for confirming the old ; yet under the Law,
God training up his people by degrees till the coming of
Christ, there was a necessity of a new supply of Divine Mes-
sengers (called Prophets) to prepare the people, and make
way for the coming of Christ. As to whom these two things
are considerable.

First, *Those Prophets whose work was to inform the people
of their duties, or to reprove them for their sins, or to prepare
them*

them for the coming of the *Messias* (which were their chief tasks) had no need to confirm the truth of their doctrine or commission from heaven by the working of miracles among them. And that on these two accounts.

First, Because God did not consummate the revelation of his mind and will to the Jews by the Ministry of *Moses*, but appointed a succession of *Prophets* to be among them, to make known his mind unto them. Now in this case, when the prophetic office was established among them, what necessity was there that every one that came to them upon an errand from God, should prove his testimony to be true by miracles, when in the discharge of his office he delivered nothing dissonant from the Law of *Moses*? It is one argument God intended a succession of *Prophets*, when he laid down such rules in his Law for the judging of them, and to know whether they were truly inspired or no, *Deut.* 18. 21, 22. And in that same place God doth promise a succession of *Prophets*, *Deut.* 18. 15, 18. *A Prophet will the Lord God raise up unto thee like unto me; to him shall ye hearken.* Which words, though in their full and compleat sense they do relate to *Christ* (who is the great Prophet of the Church) yet who ever attends to the full scope of the words, will easily perceive that the immediate sense of them doth relate to an order of *Prophets* which should succeed *Moses* among the Jews; between whom and *Moses* there would be a great similitude as to their Birth, Calling, and Doctrine, though not a just equality; which is excluded, *Deut.* 34. 10, 11. and the chief reason why it is said there that the other *Prophets* fell so much short of *Moses*, is, in regard of the signs and wonders which he wrought, as is there largely expressed. Nor may it seem strange, that by a *Prophet* should be understood an order or succession of *Prophets*, when it is acknowledged by most Protestants, that by *ὁ Αντιχριστος*, the *Antichrist*, is understood a rank and succession of several persons in the same name and function: And that it is to be understood in those words concerning a succession of *Prophets*, will appear by the occasion of their being brought in; for ver. 14. *God prohibits them to hearken after the manner of their neighbour-nations, to observers of times and Diviners,*

ners, and then brings in the following words, v. 15. as to the reason of that prohibition, that God would raise up a Prophet among themselves like unto Moses, and to him should they hearken. Now let any rational man judge whether it were so probable an argument to keep them from hearkening to Diviners of other Nations, that there should a Prophet arise 2000 years after like unto Moses, as that he would raise up a continued succession of Prophets among themselves, to whom they should hearken. Thus Origen in his excellent Books against Celsus shews the necessity of the Prophetical office among the Jews from hence; for, saith he, it being written in their Law that the Gentiles hearkened unto Oracles and Divinations; but God would not suffer it to be so among them, it presently follows, A Prophet will the Lord God raise up in the midst of thee, &c. Therefore, saith he, when the Nations round about them had their Oracles, and several ways of divination, all which were strictly prohibited among the Jews, if the Jews had no way of foreknowing things to come, it had been almost impossible, considering the great curiosity of humane nature, to have kept them from despising the Law of Moses, or apostatizing to the heathen Oracles, or setting up something like them among themselves. Which interpretation of his seems to have a great deal of reason, not only from the coherence of the words here, but from the Analogy of many other precepts of the Law of Moses, which it is most certain have a respect to the customs of the Idolatrous Nations round about them. Another reason why it is most probable, that by this is understood a succession of Prophets, is the charge which follows against false Prophets, and the rules to discover them, v. 20, 21, 22. which had not been so pertinent and coherent if the opposition did not lie between the order of true Prophets among the Jews, and the false Prophets which should rise up in the midst of them. And that which yet further justifies this interpretation, is, that there is no other place in the whole Pentateuch which doth expressly speak of a succession of Prophets, if this be not understood of it; and is it any ways probable a matter of so great moment and consequence should be wholly pretermitted? Especially when we find it

V. Arabic. vers.
& Calvin. in loc.
P. Fagium, P.
Martyr. Loc.
Com. Class. 1.
cap. 3. Sect. 12.
C. Celsus l. 1.
Deut. 18. 14.

so exactly performed in the succeeding ages of the *Jewish Commonwealth*; their immediate Rulers like *Dictators* at *Rome*, after *Moses* death, being most raised up by *immediate incitation* and *impulse* from *God*, and many of them *inspired* with a *spirit of Prophecie*. How should the *Jews* have expected these, or obeyed them when they appeared, had not *God* foretold it to them, and provided them for it by the *Law of Moses*?

Sect. 2.

Neither did these *Prophets* arise singly among them, like *blazing Stars*, one in an age to portend future events, but whole *Constellations* of them sometimes appeared together; yea, so many smaller *Prophets* were sometimes united together, as made up a perfect *Galaxy*, when they were entred into *Societies*, and became *Schools of the Prophets*; for such we frequently read of in *Scripture*. The *original* and *institution* of which may cast a *further light* into our present design, and shew us the little reason the *Jews* could have to expect miracles from them to confirm their doctrine, who were brought up in the knowledge of their *Law*, and were called out from their several societies into the *Prophetical* office by the *immediate incitation* of *God* himself. Which being so commonly known among them, there needed no such extraordinary proofs to manifest the *Divine authority* by which they were employed. Two things then we shall endeavour to clear; First, the *original* and *institution* of these *Schools of the Prophets*; and secondly, That it was the ordinary course for the *Prophets* by employment to be taken forth of these societies wherein they were educated. First, for the *original* and *institution* of these *Schools of the Prophets*. The first *Seminaries*, or places of institution among the *Jews*, were the *Cities* of the *Levites*, which were dispersed up and down in the several *Tribes* of *Israel*; *God* thereby turning that into a blessing, which was pronounced as a *curse* upon *Levi* by his Father *Jacob*, viz. that he should be divided in *Jacob*, and scattered in *Israel*. But though the fulfilling of that *Prophecy* might be the primary ground of that scattering, yet it is evident that *God* aimed at some further good in it, both in reference to the *Levites* and the *Israelites*. *Lyra* undertakes to assign four reasons of this distribution of the

Cities

Gen. 49. 7.

Cities of the Levites among the Tribes. (1) Because if they had lived but in one Tribe, the *worship of God* would have seemed to have been confined to that Tribe. (2) Because they would have been a *burden* to that Tribe they had their habitations in. (3) From the *equity* of being maintained by all who served for all. (4) Because it was their office to *teach the people*, and therefore it was necessary they should live among them. These reasons are most of them *opposed* by *Abulensis*, but defended by others. The last is that which most insist on, it being the peculiar office of the *Levites* to teach the people; so 2 Chron. 35. 4. *And said unto the Levites, qui erudiebant omnem Israel*, as *Varablus* readers it, *who taught all Israel*; and *Masius* insists on that as the great reason of their dispersion, to be ready to teach the *Law* among the *Israelites*. But yet all those who are agreed that *teaching the Law* was the duty of the *Levites*, are not yet agreed of the *manner* of that *teaching*; for there being two parts of their *Law*, the one *ceremonial* and *judicial*, and the other *moral* and *spiritual*, the question is, whether of these two did belong to, or was performed by the *Priests* and *Levites*. There are many who understand all that Office of *teaching* which belonged to the *Priests* and *Levites*, to be merely concerning the *ceremonial* part of the *Law*, i. e. deciding all *cases of controversy* which should arise concerning their ceremonial worship, which in *Levit.* 10. 10. is called *putting a difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean*. But it seems somewhat strange that *God* should take so great care about the *shell* and *outside* of his *worship*, and none at all for the *moral* and *spiritual* part of it, especially when he had set apart a whole Tribe merely for his own service, and freed them from all other employments, that they might have a greater liberty to attend upon the things relating to his service; especially when it is mentioned as the duty of the *Priests* and *Levites* to teach all the statutes which the Lord had spoken to them by the hand of *Moses*, and that they shall teach *Jacob thy statutes, and Israel thy Law*. Which notwithstanding what *Abarbanel* and others say, must certainly comprehend as well the *moral* as the *ceremonial* part of *Moses* his *Law*. And the

Job. 21.

Abul. in Job.

21. c. 7, & 8.

V. Sherlog.

Antiq.

Hebr. l. 2. c. 3.

s. 4.

Masius in

Job. c. 14.

Lev. 10. 10.

Deut. 33. 10.

Mal. 2. 7.

Priests lips are said to preserve knowledge: and God saith they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. Do these things import no more than meer deciding the cases of the ceremonial Law? But whatever Gods intention in the institution of the Levites was, we find not much in Scripture of what they did for the promoting the moral and spiritual part of divine worship; but it is no news to hear that Societies instituted for good and pious ends, should degenerate from the first intention of the Founders of them; and thus it is probable it was with the Levites, who finding the most of their benefit and advantage to come in by the ceremonial cases, might grow more negligent of the moral part of divine service, which brought no secular emolument to them.

Sect. 3.

a Sam. 3. 1.

1 Sam. 9. 12,
13.

And thence we read not of these *Schools of the Prophets*, which were *Societies* in order to *spiritual instruction*, till about the time of *Samuel*; and many think him to have been the first *Author* of them. For it is evident, that about his time the *Priesthood* was grown to a great *degeneracy*, and men thereby estranged from the worship of God; so that there seemed almost a *necessity* then of restoring some *Societies*, who might have a special eye to the spiritual part of Gods worship and service. The occasion of the institution of them, seems to have been from the resort which the people had to the *high places*, for *sacrificing*, during the captivity or uncertain abode of the *Ark of God*, after the desolation of *Shiloh*: now the people resorting to these places to perform their solemnities, it was so ordered, that a company of *Prophets* should be there resident to *bless the sacrifices*, and instruct the people. Two of these places with these Societies in them we find mentioned in the time of *Samuel*. The first mentioned, 1 Sam. 10. 5, 10. which cannot be the same with *Ramah*, although the *Syriack* and *Arabick* versions so render it. For *Samuel* had his own residence in *Ramah* whither *Saul* went to him, 1 Sam. 9. 18, 19. But in this chapter we find *Samuel* sending *Saul* on a journey from him beyond *Bethel* and the plain of *Tabor*, and there tells him he should meet with the company of *Prophets* upon the hill of God, ver. 5. Some think it was called the *Hill of God*,

God, because of its height, as the Cedars of God and the mountains of God for the highest; so Tirinus understands it, but Menochius far more probably, *quia in ea erat cœtus & veluti schola prophetarum.* The Chaldee Paraphrast renders it, *ad collem in quo arca Domini.* R. Solomon makes this hill to be Kirjath-jearim; and therefore called the hill of God, because the Ark was there in the house of Abinadab in the hill. But Lyra thinks he hath proved, that before this time the Ark was removed from Kirjath-jearim to Mizpah; but Abulensis more probably conceives it was never removed thither, and withal thinks this hill of God to be no other than Gibeah of Benjamin, where Saul inhabited; and thence the wonder was the greater, to see him prophesie among those who had known his former life and education. The other place is Naioth in Ramah, where was a high place whither the people came to sacrifice; this Ramah seems to have been the place of Samuels nativity, called Ramathaim Sophim, which the Syriack version renders *collis specularum* (some who would be ready to improve every thing for their purpose, would think it was so called in allusion to the employment of the young Studens there. So Hensius conceives צפיר צפיר to be understood, Numb 23. 14. the place of watchmen, from which word saith he, without doubt the Greeks derived their σκοποι, who were wont in such high places to observe the course and motions of the heavens; But to pass by such frivolous conjectures.) It seems a great deal more probable, that this Ramah which the Septuagint by a light mutation of the initial letters calls ἀμαθαια, was the same with Arimathea, the Town of Joseph mentioned in the Gospel. But the place where the school of the Prophets was, seems to have been, with greatest conveniency, for a place of education, at some distance from the Town. Varatylus conceives it was built in the fields of Ramah, and the word Naioth, saith Pet. Martyr, properly signifies pastures, and some remote places, *quæ fere sunt studiis aptissima.* The Chaldee Paraphrast renders Naioth by כית חולבנא a Colledge or School of propheticall education: over this Colledge Samuel himself was President, as most understand that place,

1 Sam. 7. 1.

17. Jun. in l.

1 Sam. 19. 18,
20.

1 Sam. 1. 1.

Exerit. Sacra.
l. 1. c. 2.

1 Sam. 19. 20. And when they saw the company of Prophets

prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, Jonathan renders it, & *Samuelem stantem docentem super eos.* To which we may well apply the words of Philo, speaking of the Jewish manner of instruction, τὸ μὲν ἡμεῶν & ἡμεῖς μὲν & διδασκῶντος, & ἐπιδιδόντων εἰς καλοκἀγαθίαν καὶ βελτιωμῶν τὰ τε ἔθνη καὶ τὸ βίον. The President going before and teaching, the rest increasing in goodness, and improving in life and manners.

Phil. de v. Mef.
l. 3.

Sect. 4.

Neither can we think so good and useful an institution should presently degenerate or be turned into another channel; and therefore some conceive that the most noted Prophets to the time of David were the Presidents of these Colleges; such as besides Samuel were Helcana, Gad, Nathan, Heman, and Jeduthun; and that they selected out the choicest and most hopeful of the young Levites, and here educated them, together with the Nazarites which came out of other tribes. And it seems very probable, that in all the most noted high places whither they went to sacrifice, there were such Schools erected after the first institution of them. Thence we read of such multitudes of the Prophets together in the time of Ahab, 1 Kings 18. 4. for when Jezabel cut off the Prophet of the Lord, Obadiah took an hundred and hid them in caves; certainly their number was very great, when an hundred might be saved without missing. The chief places where they resided, seem to have been Bethel, 2 Kings 2. 3. and Jericho, which was a Large College; for therein we read of fifty sons of the Prophets standing together out of their number, 2 Kings 2. 5, 7, 15. and Gilgal, which had been a place of Religion from the first entrance into Canaan; there we find the sons of the Prophets sitting before Elisha, 2 Kings 4. 38. It seems most probable that the purity of Gods worship among the ten tribes after the defection in the time of Jeroboam was preserved by the Prophets in their several Schools and places of habitation, which hath sufficient foundation in that place, 2 Kings 4. 23. where the Shunamites husband asks her wherefore she would go to the man of God that day, seeing it was neither new-moon nor Sabbath. Whereby it is both evident, that the Prophets did undertake the office of instructing the people on their solemn

solemn Festivals, and that it was their custom to resort to them for that end. Thus we see what care *God* took for the instruction of his people in a time of so general an *Apostasy* as that of the *ten tribes* was, when the *Church of God* could not be known by that *constant visibility* and *outward glory* which some speak so much of, but was then *clouded in obscurity*, and *shrouded* it self under the *mantles* of some *Prophets* which *God* continued among them, and that not by any *lineal succession* neither, though the *Jews* would fain make the *gift of Prophecy* to be a kind of *Cabala* too, and conveyed in a constant succession from one Prophet to another. Neither were these *Schools of the Prophets* only in *Israel*, but in *Judah* likewise was *God* known, and his *Name* was great among these *Schools* there. In *Jerusalem* it self there was a *Colledge* where *Huldah* the *Prophetess* lived, *2 Kings* 22. 14. some render *Mishna* in *secunda urbis parte*; for *Jerusalem* was divided into the *upper* and *nether* part of the *City*. *Abulensis* and *Lyra* will have it refer to the *three Walls* of the *City* in which the *three chief parts* of it were comprized; in the *first*, the *Temple* and the *Kings Palace*; in the *second*, the *Nobles* and the *Prophets houses*; and in the *third*, the *common people*. *Josephus* seems to favour the division of the *City* into *three parts*; but *Pineda* thinks the *second part* of the *City* was most inhabited by *Artificers*, and that the *Prophets*, and the *wise men*, and such as frequented the *Temple*, most dwelt in the *city* of *David* within the *first Wall*; therefore he conjectures that the *Colledge* was upon *Mount Sion*, (and so properly called *Sion Colledge*) and he explains that *house* which *wisdom* is said to have built, and hewn out her *seven pillars*, *Prov.* 9. 1. by this *Colledge* which he supposeth was built by *Solomon* in *Mount Sion*, and thence *ver.* 3. she is said to cry upon the *highest places* of the *City*. Thus much may serve concerning the *original* and *institution* of these *Schools of the Prophets*.

17 Manass. Ben Israel. concil. in Exod. 9. 35.

Jo. de bell. J. id. l. 6. c. 6. Pineda de rebus Sol. l. 3. c. 28.

I now come to the second thing promised concerning the *Schools of the Prophets*, which is, that it was *Gods ordinary method* to call those persons out of these *Schools*, whom he did employ in the discharge of the *Prophetical office*. Two things will be necessary for the clearing of this: *First*, what ten-

Scet. 5.

dency their education in those Schools had towards the fitting them for their propheticall office. Secondly, what evidence the Scripture gives us that God called the Prophets out from these Colledges. The first of these is very requisite to be cleared, because the propheticall office depending upon immediate inspiration, it is hard to conceive what influence any antecedent and preparatory dispositions can have upon receiving the propheticall spirit. It is commonly known how much the generality of Jewish writers do insist on the necessity of these qualifications antecedent to a spirit of Prophecy. 1. An excellent natural temper. 2. Good accomplishments both of wit and fortunes. 3. Separation from the world. 4. Congruity of place (which they make proper to Judea) 5. Opportunity of time. 6. And divine inspiration. These are so largely discoursed of by many learned men from Jewish Writers, that it be will both tedious and impertinent to recite much of their opinions concerning them; who, since they have lost the gift of Prophecy, seem to have lost too that wisdom and natural understanding, which they make one of the most necessary qualifications of a Prophet. It is not easie to imagine what subserviency riches could have to a propheticall spirit, unless the Jews be of Simon Magus his opinion, that these gifts of the Holy Ghost may be purchased with money; and if so, they think themselves in as likely a way to bid fair for a propheticall spirit as any people in the world. Or is it that they think it impossible any without them should have that free, chearful, and generous spirit, which they make so necessary to a Prophetick spirit, that it is an axiome of great authority with them, *Spiritus sanctus non residet super hominem mæstum*; and they think Elisha his fit of passion did excuse his prophetick spirit from him, which he was faine to retrieve again with a fit of Musick. There are only two sorts of those antecedent dispositions which seem to bear any affinity with the prophetick spirit: And those are such as tended to the improvement of their natural faculties, and such as tended to their advancement in piety, and consequently to the subduing all irregular motions in their souls: Not that either of these did concur by way of efficiency to the production of a spirit of Prophecy (which is an opinion

Maimo-

V. G. Vor. in
Maim. fundam.
leg. c. 7. Sect. 1.
Mr. Smith of
Prophecy. c. 8.

Maimonides seems very favourable to) but that *God* might make choice particularly of such persons, to remove all prejudices against them in those they were sent unto. For nothing could possibly dissatisfie them more concerning divine inspiration, than if the person who pretended to it were of very weak and shallow intellectuals, or known to be of an irregular conversation. In order therefore to the fuller satisfaction of men concerning these two qualifications, this Institution of them in the Schools of the Prophets was of great subserviency, because therein their only employment was to improve in knowledge, and especially in true piety. This latter being the most necessary disposition, since the Apostle hath told us that the Prophets were *Holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. And in order to this, the greatest part we can find of the exercises of those who were educated in these Schools of the Prophets, were instructions in the Law, and the solemn celebration of the praises of God: Which appears in Scripture to have been their chief employment as Prophets, and by which they are said to Prophesie: So at Gibeah at the Oratory there, we find a company of Prophets coming down from the high place with a Psalter, a Tabret and Pipe, and a Harp before them, and Prophesying.

More Nevoch.
l. 2. c. 36.

2 Pet. 1. 21.

1 Sam. 10. 5.

Sett. 6.

It may seem somewhat strange to consider what relation these Musical instruments had to the Prophesying here mentioned. Are Musical notes like some seeds Naturalists speak of, which will help to excite a prophetick spirit? Or do they tend to elevate the spirits of men, and so put them into a greater capacity of Embusiasm? Or is it because Musick is so excellent for allaying the tumults of inward passions; and so fitting the soul for the better entertainment of the Divine Spirit? Or was all this Prophesying here spoken of nothing else but vocal and instrumental Musick? So some indeed understand it, that it was only the praising God with spiritual songs and melody; wherein one as the Praecentor began a hymn, which the rest took from him and carried on. I confess it carries the fairest probability with it, that this Prophesying with Musical instruments was at their places and times of sacrifice, an adjunct, if not a part of the so-

lemn

lemn service of God: which was managed chiefly by the *Quire* of the *Sons* of the *Prophets* which were resident there, and were trained up in all exercises of *piety* and *devotion*. But yet I cannot see any reason to think that all this *Prophesying* was merely singing of *Hymns*, and playing upon their *Musical instruments* to them, as some imagine, because there seems to be implied some *immediate impulses* of a *Prophesying spirit*, by what *Samuel* said to *Saul*, that when he came among the *Prophets*, the *Spirit of the Lord* would come upon him, and he should *Prophezie* with them, and he should become another man. What strange impulse and wonderful transformation was this merely for *Saul* to joyn with the *Prophets* in their praises of God? And this needed not so much admiration as followed there upon this action of *Sauls*, that it should become a proverb, Is *Saul* also among the *Prophets*? Certainly *Saul* was a very great hater of all spiritual *Musick* before, if it became a Proverb merely for his being present at, or joyning with this company in singing their *Hymns*. Therefore others think that those who are said particularly to *Prophezie* at these *Musick meetings*, were some persons as chief among the rest, who having their spirits elevated by the *Musick*, did compose *Hymns* upon the place by a *Divine Energy* inwardly moving their minds. So that there were properly *divine raptures* in some of them, which transported them beyond the ordinary power of fancy or imagination, in dictating such *Hymns* as might be suitable for the design of celebrating the honour of God.

Self. 7.

Neither may it seem strange that such an *Enthusiastick Spirit* should seize on them only at such solemn times, since we read in the *New Testament* of a like exercise of such gifts in the *Church of Corinth*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. where we see in coming together every one had a *Psalms*, a *Doctrine*, a *Tongue*, a *Revelation*, &c. Whereby it appears that they were inspired upon the place; *etiam extemporales Hymni saepe ab afflatu erant*, as *Grotius* there observes; as we see it in frequent instances in *Scripture*, of *Simeon* and *Anna*, *Moses* and *Miriam*, *Deborah*, and *Isaiah*; and in the *Christian Church* after that *Landflood* of inspired gifts was much abated in the *Church*, they kept up a custom much like to these *extemporal*

temporal hymns, as appears evidently by *Tertullian*, post *Apol. c. 39.*
aquam manulem & lumina ut quisque de Scripturis sanctis
vel de proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo ca-
nere: After they had ended their *Love-feasts*, they begun
their *Hymns*, which were either taken from the *Scriptures*,
or of their own composition. Which *Pliny* takes notice of as *Ep. l. 10.*
a great part of the *Christians* worship, that they did *secum*
invicem carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere, they joyned in sing-
ing hymns to Christ as God. Nay, we find something very
parallel to this preserved among the ruines of the Heathen
worship; such were the Assamenta among the old Romans,
which were peculiarly sung to the honour of some particular
God; thence the Assamenta Janualia, Junonia, Minervia,
which were privata poemata & carmina in singulos eos Deos
conscripta, as the learned Joseph Scaliger observes. So like-
wise the old Greeks had their solemn hymns to their Gods,
some to the propitious Gods, which they called κλητὸς ὕμνος,
and the Latins properly Indigitamenta, and carmen calatori-
um; others they had to their Vejoves, or læva numina,
which they called ὕμνος ἑσπεριῶν; the Latins Carmen
Averruncale; but besides these, they had some peculiar to
the several Deities, as ὁ ὕμνος to Diana, πῶδον to Apollo,
ἱερὸν to Ceres, Dithyrambus to Bacchus, Adonidia to Ado-
nis, as Proclus tells us in his Chrestomathia. And it is withal
evident, that the *Heathens* thought some of their *Priests* in-
spired while they were performing these solemn Devotions to
the Gods (which probably was by Satan, as many other
things in Heathen worship taken up in imitation of these in-
spired hymns, and Musick used by the sons of the Prophets)
but their hymns were so composed, as to be fit rather to trans-
port men beyond the power of their reason, than to compose
and sweeten it, which was suitable to the fanatick Enthusi-
asm, which was so common among them. So *Proclus* tells us
that the *Io-Bacche* was βαβῆτις ὁ πολλὸν οὐράγματι, full
of noise and din; and the *Dithyrambus* was κεκρυμμένος ὁ πολὺ
πρὸ ἐνθεσίων δὲς, καὶ χορείας ἐμπαίων, a kind of ecstasick Morrice-
dance, and their *Priests* were apprehended by them to be
under a real *Enthusiasm* at these *Solemnities.* So the *Co-*
rybantes are described rather like mad men than meer *Enthu-*
siafs

Ep. l. 10.

Ep. 97.

Conject. in
Varr. p. 121.

Apud Phot. bib.
Cod. 239.

Geogr. l. 10.

gafts by Strabo, they were ἐθουσιασμοὶ πῆνες καὶ βακχικοὶ, as he describes them, dancing about with their cymbals and drums, and arms, and pipes (as though a Bedlam had been broke loose among them) yet this was in high esteem among them; for as Strabo after saith, ὅτε ἐθουσιασμοῦς ἐπινεύουσιν πνεύθειν ἔχειν δοκεῖ, καὶ τῷ μαντικῷ γένει πλησιάζειν, this Enthousiasm seemed to have a divine touch with it, and to come very near to a prophetick spirit.

But though the Prophesying with Musick among the sons of the Prophets, might be by some extemporary hymns immediately dictated by the Praecentor of the Chorus; yet we are not to imagine any such frantick actions among them as were among the Curetes and Corybantes, it being always the Devils temper to over-do, when he strives to imitate, and instead of solemn and set devotions to carry men beyond all sense and reason. The Spirit of God did never dictate any Io-Bacche's or Dihyrambs to transport and amuse the spirits of men; but those sweet airs which might both compose and elevate the spirits of all that heard them. For in probability the spirits of all these Prophets were as Lutes tuned to the same height, that when the Spirit of God did strike upon one of them, the rest presently answered to it, and so made up an entire Consort among them. So Menochius thinks the Spirit of God not only moved the spirit of him who was the Praecentor, but the rest likewise who joyned with him; and they are said to Prophesie, saith Torriellus, forte quod non quascunq; sed Propheticas duntaxat cantiones praecinerent; but from hence we clearly see what the great employment was in these Schools of the Prophets, which, as the same Author expresseth it, was statis horis de rebus divinis differere & divinis laudibus vacare; and thereby we understand what reference this institution had in order to the propheticall office, because the Spirit of God did much appear among them, and all their exercises tended to piety, and so did remove all prejudices from their persons, when God did send them abroad afterwards.

Annal. ad A.M.
2945. Sect. 14.

Sect. 8.

And so it is evident he frequently did, not to say always, for that were to put too great a restraint upon the boundless spirit of God: For sometimes, as will appear afterwards,

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God sent the *Prophets* upon extraordinary messages, and then furnished them with sufficient evidence of their *Divine commission* without being beholding to the *Testimonials* of the *Schools* of the *Prophets*. But besides these, God had a kind of *Leiger-Prophets* among his people; such were the most of those whom we read of in *Scripture*, which were no *pen-men* of the *sacred Scripture*; such in *Dauids* time we may conceive *Gad* and *Nathan*, and afterwards we read of many other *Prophets* and *Seers* among them, to whom the people made their resort; Now these in probability were such as had been trained up in the *Prophetick Schools*, wherein the *Spirit* of God did appear, but in a more fixed and settled way than in the extraordinary *Prophets* whom God did call out on some more signal occasions, such as *Isaiiah* and *Jeremiah* were. We have a clear foundation for such a distinction of *Prophets* in those words of *Amos* to *Amaziah*, *Amos* 7. 14, 15. *I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophets son; but I was a herdsman, and a gatherer of Sycamore fruits: And the Lord took me as I followed the flock; and the Lord said unto me, Go Prophesy to my people Israel.* Some understand the first words, *I was not a Prophet*, that he was not born a *Prophet* as *Jeremiah* was, not designed and set apart to it from his mothers womb; but I rather think by his not being a *Prophet*, he means he was none of those *resident Prophets* in the *Colledges* or *Schools* of them, not any of those who had led a *prophetick life*, and withdrawn themselves from converse with the world; nor was I (saith he) the son of a *Prophet*, i. e. not brought up in discipleship under those *Prophets*, and thereby trained up in order to the *prophetick function*. *Non didici inter discipulos Prophetarum*, as *Pellican* renders it; *nec institutione qua filii Prophetarum quasi ad donum Prophetie à parentibus preparabantur*, saith *Estius*. *Non à puero educatus in Scholis Propheticis*; so *Calvin* and most other modern *Interpreters* understand it as well as *Abarbinel* and the *Jewish Writers*: Whereby it is evident that Gods ordinary way for the *Prophets*, was to take such as had been trained up and educated in order to that end, although God did not tie up himself to this method, but sometimes called one from the *Court*, as he did *Isaiiah*; some-

I Sam. 10. 12,
19, 24.

times one from the *herds*, as here he did *Amos*, and bid them go *Prophesie to the house of Israel*. There was then a kind of a *standing Colledge of Prophets* among the *Israelites*, who shined as *fixed Stars* in the *Firmament*; and there were others who had a more *planetary motion*, and withal a more *lively and resplendent illumination* from the *fountain of prophetick light*. And further it seems that the *spirit of Prophecy* did not ordinarily seize on any, but such whose institution was in order to that end, by the great admiration which was caused among the people at *Sauls* so sudden *prophecying*, that it became a *Proverb*, *Is Saul also among the Prophets?* which had not given the least foundation for an adage for a *strange and unwonted thing*, unless the most common appearances of the *spirit of Prophecy* had been among those who were trained up in order to it. Thus I suppose we have fully cleared the first reason why there was no necessity for the *ordinary Prophets*, whose chief office was *instruction* of the people, to prove their commission by *miracles*, because *God* had promised a *succession of Prophets* by *Moses*, and these were brought up ordinarily to that end among them; so that all *prejudices* were sufficiently removed from their persons without any such *extraordinary power* as that of *miracles*.

CHAP. V.

The tryal of Prophetical Doctrine.

Rules of trying Prophets established in the Law of Moses. The punishment of pretenders. The several sorts of false Prophets. The case of the Prophet at Bethel discussed. The tryal of false Prophets belonging to the great Sanhedrin. The particular rules whereby the Doctrine of Prophets was judged. The proper notion of a Prophet; not foretelling future contingencies, but having immediate Divine revelation. Several principles laid down for clearing the doctrine of the Prophets. 1. That immediate dictates of natural light are not to be the measure of Divine revelation. Several grounds for Divine revelation from natural light. 2. Whatever is directly repugnant to the dictates of nature, cannot be of Divine revelation. 3. No Divine revelation doth contradict a Divine positive Law without sufficient evidence of Gods intention to repeal that Law. 4. Divine revelation in the Prophets was not to be measured by the words of the Law, but by the intention and reason of it. The Prophetical office a kind of Chancery to the Law of Moses.

THE second reason why those Prophets whose main office *Sett. 1.* was instruction of the people, or meerly fore telling future events, needed not to confirm their doctrine by miracles, is, because they had certain rules of tryal by their Law, whereby to discern the false Prophets from the true. So that if they were deceived by them, it was their own oscitancy and inadvertency which was the cause of it. God in that Law which was confirmed by miracles undoubtedly Divine, had established a Court of tryal for Prophetick Spirits, and given such certain rules of procedure in it, that no men needed to be deceived unless they would themselves. And there was a greater necessity of such a certain way of tryal among them, because it could not otherwise be expected, but in a Nation where a Prophetic Spirit was so common, there would be very many pretenders to it, who might much

endanger the faith of the people unless there were some certain way to find them out. And the more effectually to deter men either from counterfeiting a Prophetick Spirit, or from hearkening to such as did, God appointed a severe punishment for every such pretender, viz. upon legal conviction that he be punished with death. Deut. 18. 20. But the Prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other Gods, shall surely die. The Jews generally understand this of strangling, as they do always in the Law, when the particular manner of death is not expressed. And therein a false Prophet and a seducer were distinguished each from other, that a meer seducer was to be stoned to death under sufficient testimony, Deut. 13. 6, 10. But the false Prophet is there said in general only to be put to death, Deut. 13. 1, 5. The main difference between the seducer and false Prophet was, that the seducer sought by cunning persuasions and plausible arguments to draw them off from the worship of the true God; but the false Prophet always pretended Divine revelation for what he perswaded them to, whether he gave out that he had that revelation from the true God, or from Idols and false Gods. So that the meer pretence to Divine revelation was that which God would have punished with so great severity.

V. Maimon. de
Idol. c. 5. s. 1.
& ibi Vossium.

Scct. 2.

V. Except. Gem.
Sanhed. c. 10.
s. 3.

1 King. 22. 11.

Jer. 28. 11.

The Jews tell us of three sorts of Prophets who were to be punished with death by men, and three other sorts who were reserved to divine punishment: Of the first rank were these. 1. He that Prophesied that which he had not heard, and for this they instance in Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, who made him horns of iron and said, Thus saith the Lord, this was the lying Prophet. 2. He that speaks that which was revealed not to him but to another, and for this they instance in Hananiah the son of Azur, (but how truly I shall not determine) this was the Flattering Prophet. 3. He that prophesied in the name of an Idol, as the Prophets of Baal did, this was the Idol Prophet. These three when once fully convicted, were to be put to death. The other rank of those which were left to Gods hand consisted of these. 1. He that stifles and smothers his own Prophecy, as Jonas did, by which
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it may seem that when the *Divine Spirit* did overshadow the *understandings* of the *Prophets*, yet it offered no violence to their *faculties*, but left them to the free *determination* of their own *wills* in the *execution* of their office ; but this must be understood of a lower degree of *Prophecy* ; for at some times their *Prophecys* were as *fire in their bones*, that they were never at any rest till they had discharged their office. But withal by the example of *Jonas*, we see, that though the *Spirit of Prophecy* like the *fire* on the *Altar* could only be *kindled from heaven*, yet it might be *destroyed* when it was not *maintained* with something to feed upon ; or when it met not with suitable entertainment from the *spirits* of those it fell upon, it might *retreat* back again to heaven, or at least lie hid in the *embers* till a *new blast* from the *Spirit of God* doth ἀναζωοποιεῖν, retrieve it into its former heat and activity. Thus it was with *Jonas*. 2. The other was, he that despised the words of a true Prophet ; of such God saith Deut. 18. 19. *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall not hearken to my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.* Which *Maimonides* explains by מיתה בירו שמים death by the hands of God, which he thus distinguisheth from the *Cereth*, that he makes the death per manus cœli to be less than the *Cereth*, because this latter continued in the soul after death, but the other was expiated by death ; but generally they interpret it of a sudden death which falls upon the person. 3. The last is, he who hearkens not to the words of his own Prophecy ; of which we have a most remarkable instance in Scripture, concerning the Prophet whom God sent to Bethel (whom *Tertullian* calls *Sameas*, the Jews *Hedua*) whom God destroyed in an unusual manner for not observing the command which God had given him, not to eat bread nor drink water at Bethel, nor turn again by the way he came. Neither was it any excuse to this Prophet that the old Prophet at Bethel told him that an Angel spake unto him by the Word of the Lord that he should turn back. For, 1. Those whom God reveals his will unto, he gives them full assurance of it, in that they have a clear and distinct perception of God upon their own minds ; and so they have no doubt but it is the Word of the Lord which comes

Jer. 20. 9.

Maim. de fundam. legis c. 9. s. 4. V. Abarbinel, de Cereth. apud Buxtorf. de spons. & divort. p. 182. 1 King. 13. 2. Ver. 18.

unto

unto them; but this Prophet could have no such certainty of the Divine revelation which was made to another, especially when it came immediately to contradict that which was so specially enjoined him. 2. Where God commands a Prophet to do any thing in the pursuit of his message, there he can have no ground to question whether God should countermand it or no by another Prophet; because that was in effect to thwart the whole design of his message. So it was in this action of the Prophet; for God intended his not eating and drinking in Bethel to testify how much he loathed and abominated that place since its being polluted with Idolatry. 3. He might have just cause to question the integrity of the old Prophet, both because of his living in Bethel, and not openly, according to his office, reproving their Idolatry, and that God should send him out of Judea upon that very errand, which would not have seemed so probable, if there had been true Prophets resident upon the place. 4. The thing he desired him to do, was not an act of that weight and importance on which God used to send his Word to any Prophets, much less by one Prophet to contradict what he had said by another, and therefore Tertullian faith of him, *pœnam deserti jejunii luit*, God punished him for breaking his fast at Bethel; and therefore that message of this Prophet seemed to gratify more mans carnal appetite, than usually the actions of Prophets did, which were most times matters of hardship and uneasiness to the flesh. 5. However all these were, yet he yielded too soon, especially having so much reason on his side as he had; being well assured that God had commanded him, he had reason to see some clear evidence of a countermand, before he altered his mind: if he had seen any thing upon tryal which might have staggered his faith, he ought to have made his immediate recourse to God by prayer for the settlement of his mind and removal of this great temptation. But so easily to hearken to the words of a lying Prophet, which contradicted his own message, argued either great unbelief as to his own commission, or too great easiness and inadvertency in being drawn aside by the old Prophet. And therefore God made that old Prophet himself in the midst of his entertainment, as with a hand-writing

*De jejuniis,
cap. 16.*

against

against the wall to tell him he was weighed in the ballance and found too light, and therefore his life should be taken from him. Thus we see how dangerous a thing it was either to counterfeit a Spirit of Prophecy, or to hearken to those who did.

It is the generally received opinion among the Jewish *Sect. 3.* Doctors, that the cognizance and tryal of false Prophets did peculiarly belong to the great Sanhedrin. And that this was one end of its institution. So Maimonides after he had

De Idolat.
c. 5. f. 11.

largely discoursed of the punishment of a se luer, and speaking of that of a false Prophet, he laies this down as a standing rule among them *ואין רנין נביא השקר אלא בכר שר נא*

No false Prophet was to be judged but in the Court of seventy one; which was the number of the great Sanhedrin. And there is something looks very like this in the proceedings of the people of Israel against the Prophet Jeremiah; for the people, the Priests and the Prophets, they laid hold on him; and immediately after we read that the Princes of Judah

Jer. 25. 8.

(by whom Grotius understands the Senators of the great Sanhedrin) they came up from the Kings house to the house of the Lord, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the Lords house; (which probably was the place where the great Sanhedrin sate) where after a particular examination of Jeremiah,

Ver. 10.

they acquit him as a person not worthy to die upon a counterfeiting Prophecy, but declare that he spake unto them in the name of the Lord. And in this sense Grotius likewise understands what is said of Zedekiah concerning Jeremiah to the Princes of Judah afterwards, Behold he is in your hand; for the King is not he that can do ought against you, i. e. saith

*V. Grot. in l. &
Selden. de Syn.
l. 2. c. 15. f. 4.
& l. 2. c. 6. f. 4.
Jer. 26. 16.
Jer. 38. 5.*

Grotius, in manibus Syndrii, cuius est judicare de Prophetis vero aut falso. And to this many make those words of our Saviour refer, that it is impossible a Prophet should perish out of Jerusalem, because the seat of the great Sanhedrin was in Jerusalem; and so elsewhere our Saviour saith, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee; because there it was the true Prophets were destroyed as though they had been false ones, and Gods own messengers punished with the death of seducers, which was lapidation. And on this very account many are

Luke 13. 33.

Matth. 23. 37.

of opinion that *our Saviour* was condemned by the *Sanhedrin* at *Jerusalem*; which is supposed to have been assembled in the house of *Caiaphas* the *High Priest*, when *Christ* was carried thither for *examination*; which some think to have been at his lodgings in the *Temple*, others at his *Palace* in the *City*. For we read that the *chief Priests*, and the *Elders*,
 Matth. 26. 52. and all the *Council* were met together at the *High Priests Palace*, in order to *our Saviours* tryal. The next morning they were met early together again in order to the further scanning of this business; but they seem not to examine *Christ* concerning a true spirit of *Prophecy*, but concerning his being the *Messias*, and calling himself the *Son of God*, and so they would seem rather to proceed upon the *Law* against *blasphemy*, than that against *false Prophets*.

Matth. 26. 63.

Seft. 4.

But that which was the greatest security of the people against the imposture of false Prophets, was the certain rules of judging them which were laid down in the *Law of Moses*; Which may be comprehended under these two heads, such as concern their doctrine, or such as concern their predictions. First, such as concerned the *Prophets doctrine*, which should especially be looked after, because the main office of a *Prophet* was to be *interpres & internuncius divinae voluntatis*, to be a revealer of *Gods will* to men. For the primary notion of a *Prophet* doth not lie in foretelling future events, but in declaring and interpreting to the world the mind of *God* which he receives by immediate revelation from himself. So that the receiving what he makes known by immediate revelation, is that which formally constitutes a *Prophet*; but it is wholly extrinsecal and accidental what time his *Prophecy* respects, whether past, present, or to come; but because future contingencies are the furthest out of the reach of humane understanding, therefore the predictions of such have been chiefly looked on as the chief note and character of a *Prophet*, as being apprehended to be the strongest evidence of *Divine revelation*. And from hence it is in *Scripture* that the *Patriarchs* as *Abraham* and others are called *Prophets*, not because of any predictions uttered by them, but because of the frequency of immediate *Divine revelations* among them. And hence likewise those in the *New Testament* who expounded the

Psal. 105. 15.

Gen. 20. 7.

the *Scriptures*, by *immediate inspiration* are called *Prophets*, and this was the *προφῆταις* spoken of by the *Apostle*, the *exposition* of the *hidden mysteries* of the *Old Testament* by an *immediate inspiration*. And there is no word in the *Hebrew* for a *Prophets*, which may not equally respect all differences of *time*, but every one doth import *immediate inspiration*; for *נביא* properly is one *qui revelat abscondita*; *סֵפֶר* a *Seer* chiefly respects the *clear representation* of the *intellectual species* by the *lumen propheticum* to the *understanding*, and *חֹזֶה* carries an *equal indifferency* to all circumstances of *times*.

1 Cor. 14. 26.

Vid. Alstedii.
Trisol. proph.
p. 53.

This being then the chief *notion* of a *Prophet*, whatever he declared as the *mind and will* of *God*, must be searched and examined, to see what *consonancy* it hath thereto. For the question which *Moses* supposeth, is founded upon clear and evident reason, *And if thou shalt say in thine heart, How shall we know the Word which the Lord hath not spoken?* For it being plain that there may be *false Prophets* as well as *true*, we had need of some certain *rules* to judge of what is delivered for *divine revelation*. For the clearing of which important question, I lay down these principles.

Secl. 5.

Deut. 18. 21.

The *immediate dictates* of *natural light*, are no sufficient standard to judge of *divine revelation* by. I mean not in reference to *consonancy* or *repugnancy* to *natural light*, but in reference to the *extent* and *latitude* of *divine revelation*, i. e. that *natural light* doth not contain in it whatever may be known of *God* or of his *Will*; and that upon these reasons.

1.

1. It implies no *repugnancy* to any *dictate* of *nature*, that *God* should reveal any thing more of his *mind and will*, than is contained in the *light of nature*. 2. *Nature* reacheth as to *matters* concerning *religion*, no further than the *obligation* to *duty*, but leaves the particular *determination* of the manner of *obedience* to *divine positive Laws*, as is clear in reference to the *time*, *place*, and *particular duties* of *worship*. 3. *Nature* owning an *universal obligation* to the *will* of *God* in whatever he shall *command*, doth suppose a *power* in *God* to *command* what he *pleaseth*. 4. *Nature* is *sensible* of its own *decays*, and the *imperfection* of its own *light*, and therefore seems rather to require further *illumination*, than to put

any bar against it. 5. *Mans happiness* being a *free gift* of *Gods*, it stands to the *highest reason* that he should have the prescribing of the *conditions* which are in order to it; now these *conditions* being the *results*, not of *Gods nature*, but of his *arbitrarious will*, it is impossible that *natural light* could ever reach to the full discovery of them. 6. It hath been the *general sense* of all Nations in the world, that *God* may reveal more of his will than *nature* can reach unto; which sense discovers it self in two things. 1. *Praying* to their several *gods* for *direction*. 2. *Hearkening* after pretended *Oracles*, which the *Devil* could never have had that *advantage* of *deceiving* the world by, had it not been for this *general sense* of *mankind*, that there wanted some particular *revelation* from *God* to make men *happy*. So then this may be assumed as a *principle*, that *God* may reveal more of his *mind* and *will* to *mankind*; than he hath done by the *dictates* of meer *natural light* and *reason*.

2.
Sect. 6.

Whatever speaks a direct repugnancy to any of the fundamental dictates of nature, cannot be of divine revelation. For those being founded, not upon any positive or arbitrary will, but upon those inward impressions which are derived from the divine nature its self, it cannot in reason be supposed that *God* should commission any to enervate his own fundamental Law; and so by one will to contradict another. *Placitum Regis* must never stand against the *Placita Corone*: Those things which depend upon fundamental and established Laws, hold good against any positive sentence or declaration of a *Princes* will; Because he is supposed to have bound up himself by the established Laws; and therefore any thing else which comes from him, contrary to them, is supposed not to be the *Will* of the *Prince*, but of the persons persuading him to it. But this now cannot be supposed in *God*, that he should be any ways drawn to cassate the obligation of what is imprinted upon the souls of men as his own Law. But yet we must distinguish between nulling the general obligation, and altering the particular nature of any thing which depends upon that general Law; the first in any case is impossible, that any divine revelation should make it not to be mans duty to obey his maker, or not to be a sin to commit murder.

murder, to lie, or to steal from another; but there may come a particular revelation from God to alter the respects and nature of such things as do immediately depend upon his own dominion; as the lives of persons and the properties of things are; and thus God did reveal to Abraham that he should go and sacrifice his son, which had been no murder when done upon Gods immediate command, and for a sacrifice to himself, and therefore would have been acceptable as a testimony of entire obedience (which God did accept without the act) and so the Israelites taking the Egyptians Jewels, and dispossessing the Canaanites, did depend upon Gods immediate disposal of these things to them; which otherwise had been a sin in them; and no doubt was so to any that were unsatisfied whether God had immediately commanded it or no. Or from hence to infer any general rule, is no doubt a breach of divine commands, and contrary to his nature and will.

Where God hath established a positive Law, prescribing a form and manner wherein he will be worshipped, it is sufficient evidence of a false Prophet, to go about to null the obligation of that Law; unless there be as great evidences given, that God did intend the establishing a new Law by that person, as he did at first the institution of the old by the hand of Moses. This latter clause is inserted, to shew that the succeeding of the doctrine of Christ into the place of the Law of Moses, doth not bear any repugnancy to the Hypothesis laid down, there being greater evidences of Gods intending the abolishing the ceremonial Law by the Gospel of Christ, than there were of the establishment of it by Moses. But of those afterwards. I now only speak of such as upon the meer pretence of divine revelation, should destroy any precept of an established positive Law; and this, as far as we can find, was the great rule the Jews went by; if any thing were spoken by any Prophet, contrary to the Law of Moses, or tending to the alteration of the worship of God established thereby, he was accounted a false Prophet. The modern Jews to justify themselves in their own unbelief, as to the doctrine of Christ, extend this further than the Law doth; for they enlarge it to all the precepts of the ceremonial Law; whereas God in the

3.
Sect. 7.

Law seems to limit it to the *Moral Law*, and chiefly insists on the three first precepts of the *Decalogue* : and therefore condemns such a one as *spake in the name of the Lord, when he had not commanded them*, Deut. 18. 20. and such as *endeavoured to bring in idolatry*, Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3. where though the *false Prophet* should offer to do signs and wonders before them, yet if his intention were to draw them to worship false gods, they were not to hearken unto him. And therefore *Maimonides*, where he largely disputes about the truth of

De fundam. leg.
c. 8. s. 7.

prophecies, laies this down as a certain rule : *Si Prophetæ surrexerit, atque magna miracula aut prodigia fecerit & ad laboraverit falsitatis convincere Prophetiam Moſis M. N. istum non audimus, quia certo novimus prodigium præſtigiis aut incantationibus productum eſſe*, as *Vorſtius* renders him. If a Prophet do never ſo great miracles, and ſeeks to convince Moſes of falſhood, we are not to hearken to him ; for we know that they are not done by the power of God, but by the illuſions of the Devil. And elſewhere he tells us, that if any one pretends to prophecy עבד עול in the name of idols, they muſt not ſo much as diſpute with him, nor anſwer him, nor deſire any ſigns or miracles from him ; and if of himſelf he ſhews any, we are not to regard or mind them ; for, ſaith he, whoever doth but doubt in his mind concerning them, he breaks that command, and thou ſhalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet. So that the doctrine once eſtabliſhed, ought to be our moſt certain rule, according to which we muſt judge of all pretend-ers to miracles, if their deſign be to draw men off from Gods Word, we are not to hearken to what they either ſay or do.

De Idololat.
c. 5. s. 9.

Deut. 13. 3.

4.
Sect. 8.

The doctrine of theſe Prophets who ſeek not to introduce Idolatry, muſt not be meaſured by a ſtrict conformity to the words of Moſes his Law, but to the main reaſon and intention of it. The great reaſon of this is, becauſe God did not intend the Jews ſhould always reſt in the Paſſage of the Ceremonial Law, but ſent them Prophets to train them up by degrees, and to fit them for a ſtate of greater perfection ; and therefore it would be very unreaſonable to judge whether they were true Prophets or no, exactly by that which they came gradually to wean them from ; which were all one, as to try one

one whether he were grown a *man* or no, by the *swaddling clouts* he wore when he was a *child*. God tempered the *Ceremonial Law* much according to the *condition* and *capacity* of the *persons* it was prescribed to, and therefore the *sanctions* of it did immediately respect their temporary concerns; but we are not to think the end of that dispensation was to be merely a *Covenant* for the *Land of Promise*; but as the *Cherubims* in the *Temple* did alwaies look towards the *Mercy-seat*, so did this whole *Oeconomy* look towards the coming of the *Messias*. But it was with the generality of the *Jews*, as it is with *Ignorant people*, who looking up to the *heavens*, cannot fancy the *stars* to be any bigger than they seem to them; but *Astronomers* by the help of their *Optick tubes* and *Telescopes*, do easily discern the just magnitude of them; so the *Jews* ordinarily thought there was no more in those *types* and *shadows*, than was visibly represented to them; but such as had the help of the *Divine Spirit* (the best *Telescope* to discern the *day-star* from on high with) could easily look through those *perspectives*, into the most glorious *mysteries* of the *Gospel of Jesus Christ*. These *types* being like *triangular Prismes*, that must be set in a due light and posture, before they can represent that great variety of *spiritual mysteries* which was contained in them. Now the great office of the *Prophets* was to administer this *light* to the people, and to direct them in those excellent pieces of *Perspective*, wherein by the help of a *Prophetick glass* they might see the *Son of God* fully represented to their view. Besides this, the *Prophetical* office was a kind of *Chancery* to the *Mosaick Law*, wherein the *Prophets* did interpret the *Pandects* of the *Law* *ex aequo & bono*, and frequently shewed in what *Cases* God did dispence with the outward letter of it, to exalt the more the inward sense and reason of it. Hence the *Prophets* seem many times to speak contemptibly of the outward prescribed *Ceremonies*, when their intent is not to condemn the observation of them, but to tell the people there were greater things which God looked at, than the outward observation of some *Ceremonial precepts*, and that God would never accept of that by way of *commutation*, for real and internal goodness. Hence the *Prophets* by their own practice, did frequently shew that.

Psal. 50. 8. 51.

16.

Isa. I. 11. 13.

66. 3.

Jer. 7. 21, 22,

23.

1 King 18. 38.

Vid. Jarchi. in

Deut. 18. 21.

Et Vorst. ad

Maim. de fund.

c. 9. f. 5, 6, 7.

that the *Law of Moses* did not so indispensably oblige men, but that *God* would accept of those *actions* which were performed without the *regularity* required by the *Law of Moses*; and thus he did of *sacrificing* upon *high places*, not onely before the building of the *Temple*, but sometimes after, as he accepted of the *sacrifice* of *Elijah* on *Mount Carmel*, even when *high places* were forbidden. Which the *Jews* are become so sensible of, that they grant that a *true Prophet* may sometimes *command* something to be done in *violation* of the *Law of Moses*, so he doth not draw people to *Idolatry*, nor destroy the *obligation* of *Moses* his *Law*. But this they restrain to *לפי שעה* something done in *case of necessity*, and that it should not pass into a *president* or a *perpetual Law*; and therefore their rule is *לפי שעה שומעו לו בכל* The *Prophet* was to be *hearkened to* in every thing he commanded in a *case of necessity*. But by this it is clear that the *Prophets* were not to be tryed by the *letter* of the *Law of Moses*, but by the *end* and the *reason* of it. Thus much I suppose will make it clear what *rules* the people had to try the *Prophets* doctrine by, without *miracles*.

CHAP. VI.

The tryal of Prophetical Predictions and Miracles.

The great difficulty of the trying the truth of Prophetical predictions from Jerem. 18. 7, 8, &c. Some general Hypotheses premised for the clearing of it. The first concerns the grounds why predictions are accounted an evidence of divine revelation. Three Confessories drawn thence. The second, the manner of Gods revelation of his will to the minds of the Prophets. Of the several degrees of Prophecy. The third is, that God did not alwayes reveal the internal purposes of his will unto the true Prophets. The grand question propounded how it may be known when predictions express Gods decrees, and when only the series of causes. For the first, several rules laid down. 1. When the prediction is confirmed by a present miracle. 2. When the things foretold exceed the probability of second causes. 3. When confirmed by Gods oath. 4. When the blessings foretold are purely spiritual. Three rules for interpreting the Prophecies which respect the state of things under the Gospel. 5. When all circumstances are foretold. 6. When many Prophets in several ages agree in the same predictions. Predictions do not express Gods unalterable purposes, when they only contain comminations of judgements, or are predictions of temporal blessings. The case of the Ninivites, Hezekiah, and others opened. Of repentance in God, what it implies. The Jewish objections about predictions of temporal blessings answered. In what cases miracles were expected from the Prophets, when they were to confirm the truth of their religion. Instanced in the Prophet at Bethel, Elijah, Elisha, and of Moses himself; whose divine authority that it was proved by miracles, is demonstrated against the modern Jews, and their pretences answered.

THe next thing which the rules of tryal concerned, was the predictions of the Prophets. Concerning which God himself hath laid down this general rule, Deut. 18. 22. *Scct. 1.*

When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him. Grotius understands this place of the Prophets telling the people he would do some miracles to confirm his doctrine; but, saith he, if those miracles were not done as he said, it was an evident demonstration of a false Prophet. It is certain it was so; for then his own mouth told him he was a lying Prophet; but these words seem to refer rather to something future than present, and are therefore generally understood concerning the truth of predictions; which was a matter of very difficult tryal, in regard of the goodness or the justice of God so frequently interposing between the prediction and the event. That place which makes it so difficult to discern the truth of a prediction by the event, is Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9, 10. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and destroy it; If that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from evil, I will repent of the evil I had thought to do unto them; And at what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.* By which place it seems clear, that even after the predictions of Prophets, God doth reserve a liberty to himself, either to repent of the evil or the good that was fore-told concerning any people; how then can the fidelity of a Prophet be discovered by the event, when God may alter the event, and yet the Prophet be a true Prophet? This being a case very intricate and obscure, will call for the more diligence in the unfolding of it: In order to which, we shall first premise some general Hypotheses, and then come to the particular resolution of it. The general Hypotheses will be concerning the way and method of Gods revealing future contingencies to the Prophets, without which it will be impossible to resolve the particular emergent cases concerning predictions.

Sect. 2.

1. Hypoth.

The prediction of future events is no further an argument of a Prophetick spirit, than as the fore-knowledge of those things

is supposed to be out of the reach of any created understanding, and therefore God challengeth this to himself in Scripture, as a peculiar prerogative of his own, to declare the things that are to come, and thereby manifests the Idols of the Gentiles to be no Gods, because they could not shew to their worshippers the things to come, Isa. 44. 6, 7. From this hypothesis these three Conjectaries follow.

1. That the events which are foretold, must be such as do exceed the reach of any created intellect; for otherwise it could be no evidence of a Spirit of true Prophecy; so that the foretelling of such events as depend upon a series of natural causes, or such as though they are out of the reach of humane understanding, yet are not of the Diabolical, or such things as fall out casually true, but by no certain grounds of prediction, can none of them be any argument of a Spirit of Prophecy.

2. That where there were any other evidences, that the Prophet spake by Divine Revelation; there was no reason to wait the fulfilling of every particular Prophecy before he was believed as a Prophet. If so, then many of Gods chiefest Prophets could not have been believed in their own Generations; because their Prophecies did reach so far beyond them, as Isaiahs concerning Cyrus, the Prophet at Bethel concerning Josias: and all the Prophecies concerning the captivity and deliverance from it, must not have been believed till fulfilled, that is, not believed at all: for when Prophecies are accomplished, they are no longer the objects of faith, but of sense. Where then God gives other evidences of Divine inspiration, the credit of the Prophet is not suspended upon the minute accomplishment of every event foretold by him. Now it is evident there may be particular Divine revelation of other things besides future contingencies, so that if a reason may be given why events once foretold may not come to pass, there can be no reason why the credit of any Prophecy should be invalidated on that account; because every event is not exactly correspondent to the prediction. It is most certain that whatever comes under Divine knowledge, maybe Divinely revealed; for the manifestation which is caused by any light, may extend its self to all things to

which that *light* is extended: but that *light* which the *Prophets* saw by was a *Divine light*, and therefore might equally extend it self to all kind of *objects*; but because *future contingencies* are the most remote from *humane knowledge*, therefore the *foretelling* of these hath been accounted the great evidence of a true *Prophet*; but yet there may be a *knowledge* of other things in a lower degree than *future contingencies*, which may immediately depend upon *Divine revelation*; and these are,

1. *Such things which cannot be known by one particular man, but yet are certainly known by other men*; as the present knowledge of things done by persons at a remote distance from them: thus *Elisha* knew what *Gebazi* did, when he followed *Naaman*; and thus the knowledge of the thoughts of anothers heart depends upon immediate *Divine revelation*, whereas every one may certainly know the thoughts of his own heart; and therefore to some those things may be matters of sense or evident demonstration, which to another may be a matter of immediate revelation.

2 King. 5. 26.

1 Cor. 14. 25.

2. *Such things as relate not to future contingencies, but are matters of faith exceeding the reach of humane apprehension*; such things as may be known when revealed, but could never have been found out without immediate revelation; such all the mysteries of our religion are, the mystery of the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Hypostatical union*, the death of the *Son of God* for the pardon of the sins of mankind. Now the immediate revelation of either of these two sorts of objects speaks as much a truly *Prophetical spirit* as the prediction of *future contingencies*. So that this must not be looked on as the just and adequate rule to measure a spirit of Prophecy by; because the ground of judging a *Prophetical spirit* by that, is common with other things without that, seeing other objects are out of the reach of humane understanding as well as future events, and therefore the discovery of them must immediately flow from *Divine revelation*.

3. *The revelation of future events to the understanding of a Prophet, is nevertheless immediate, although the event may not be correspondent to the prediction*. So that if it be manifest that *God* immediately reveal such future contingencies to

a Prophet, he would be nevertheless a true Prophet whether those predictions took effect or no. For a true Prophet is known by the truth of Divine revelation to the person of the Prophet, and not by the success of the thing, which as is laid down in the hypothesis, is no further an evidence of a true Prophet than as it is an argument *a posteriori* to prove Divine revelation by. If then the alteration of events after predictions be reconcileable with the truth and faithfulness of God, there is no question but it is with the truth of a Prophetical spirit, the formality of which lies in immediate revelation.

The Prophets could not declare any thing more to the people than was immediately revealed unto themselves. What was presently revealed, so much they knew and no more, because the spirit of Prophecy came upon them *per modum impressionis transeuntis*, as the Schools speak, and not *per modum habitus*; the *lumen propheticum* was in them not as *lumen in corpore lucido*, but as *lumen in aëre*; and therefore the light of revelation in their spirits depended upon the immediate irradiations of the Divine Spirit. The Prophets had not always a power to Prophesie when they would themselves; and thence it is said when they Prophesied, that the Word of the Lord came unto them. And therefore the Schools determine that a Prophet upon an immediate revelation did not know *omnia prophetabilia* (as they speak in their barbarous language) all things which God might reveal; the reason whereof Aquinas thus gives; the ground, saith he, of the connexion of divers objects together is some common tie or principle which joyns them together; as charity or prudence is in moral virtues; and the right understanding of the principles of a science, is the ground why all things belonging to that science are understood; but now in Divine revelation, that which connects the objects of Divine revelation is God himself; now because he cannot be fully apprehended by any humane intellect, therefore the understanding of a Prophet cannot comprehend all matters capable of being revealed, but only such as it pleaseth God himself freely to communicate to the Prophets understanding by immediate revelation. This is further evident by all those different degrees of illumination and Prophecy which the

Sect. 3.
Hyp. 2.

2. 2. q. 171.
Art. 2.---4.

2. 2. q. 173.
art. 3.

Jews and other writers speak so much of, viz. of *dreams* and *visions*, the *inspirations* of the *Holy Spirit*, the *gradus Mosaicus*, the *external voice*, &c. Now in every one of these degrees the Prophet could go no further than his present revelation extended; and therefore Aquinas determines that the *understandings* of the Prophets were *instrumenta deficientia respectu principalis agentis*, i. e. that in prophetic illumination the mind of the Prophet was so moved by the Spirit of God, as an instrument in the hand of an Artificer, which bears no proportion with the skill of the workman: And therefore the mind of a Prophet is moved, sometimes only to apprehend the thing represented (which they call *instinctus Divinus*, of which they say a Prophet may have no certainty whether it comes from God or no) sometimes it is moved so far as to know certainly that this revelation is from God (this they call *lumen Propheticum*) sometimes a Prophet may be moved to speak those things which he fully understands; so it was with most of the true Prophets; but sometimes men may be moved to speak that which they understand not, as is plain in Caiaphas, and probable in Balaam. Sometimes a thing was represented to the fancy of one without any possibility of understanding the meaning of those imaginary species, as in Pharaohs and Nebuchadnezzars dreams; and to another may be given the true judgement of those motions of fancy without the representation of the things to them, as in Joseph and Daniel. Now in these and many other different impressions of this prophetic spirit, the Prophets to whom the things were revealed, could go no further than the degree of the revelation made to them did extend.

Seet. 4.
3. Hyp.

God did not always reveal to the Prophets the internal counsels and decrees of his own will, but often only the method and series of his providence in the administration of things in the world. Which is the ground of that three-fold distinction of Prophecy in the Schools into *prophetia predestinationis*, *prophetia præscentiæ*, and *prophetia comminationis*; which is taken from the ordinary gloss upon Matth. 1. where they are thus explained; the Prophecy of Predestination is when the event depends wholly upon Gods will without any respect

spect to ours, as the *Prophecy* of the *Incarnation* of *Christ*; the *Prophecy* of *Prescience* is of such things as depend upon the *liberty* of *mans will*; and the *Prophecy* of *Commination* only denotes *Gods denunciations* of *heavy judgements* against a people. But *Aquinas* doth better reduce the two former to one, and so the ground of the difference is to be fetched from the different wayes whereby *God* knows things in the world; which is either as they are in their causes, and so they note the order and series of things in the world, with the mutual respects and dependencies they have one upon another, and this refers to *Gods administration* of things in the world; or else *God* looks upon them as they are in themselves, or according to his own positive determinations of them; and now in this sense they are unalterable; but in the other they are not; but *God* may alter those respects of things when he pleaseth. Now though this different manner of knowledge can never be conceived separate from one another in the *Divine understanding*, yet in the revelation made to the mind of a *Prophet*, they may be disjoyned from each other, because *God* doth not always reveal things in the highest degree to the *Prophets*; for no free agent doth alwayes act as far as he can. And therefore propheticall revelation is sometimes a representation of *Gods internal decrees*, and then they alwayes take effect; and sometimes only the order of causes and effects, and they may admit of an alteration, and the *Prophecy* nevertheless be true, because then it referred only to the series of causes in the world according to which the events would follow if *God* himself did not interpose. These things being thus premised, we come to particular resolutions, which must arise from the evidences that may be given when propheticall predictions did expresse *Gods internal purpose* and decree, and when only the order of the causes in the world; for in these latter it is apparent that events might not answer predictions, and yet the *Prophet* be a true *Prophet*: which is a matter of greater difficulty, viz. to find out the exact differences of these two, till the event hath made it apparent which came from *Gods unalterable purpose*, and which not. But though it be a subject little spoken to either by *Jewish* or *Christian Writers*, yet we are in hopes there may be some
such

such clear notes of distinction discovered between them, even *à priori*, which may sufficiently clear Gods faithfulness, and the Prophets truth, though the event be not alwayes correspondent to the words of a prediction.

Sect. 5. I begin then with the evidences that may be given when predictions do flow from internal purpose and decree.

1.

Every prediction confirmed by a present miracle, doth not express meerly the order of causes, but the determinations of Gods will, because there can be no sufficient reason given why the order of causes in nature should be altered to express the dependencies of things on each other; for herein a miracle would rather tend to weaken than strengthen faith, because the end of the miracle would be to confirm their faith as to events following upon their causes; but now the medium used for that end seems to prove the contrary, viz. that God can alter the series of causes when he pleases himself by working miracles, and therein going contrary to the course of nature; and therefore a miracle seems to be a very incongruous argument in this, because it self is an evidence that may be, which it comes to prove shall not be. But when Prophets come to declare the internal purposes of the will of God concerning future contingencies, no argument can be more suitable to demonstrate the truth of what is spoken, than the working of a present miracle; for this demonstrates to the senses of men, that however unlikely the event may be to them which is fore-told, yet with God all things are possible, and that it is very unlikely God would send such a messenger to declare a falsehood, whom he entrusted so great a power with, as that of working miracles. Thus it was in that remarkable Prophecy concerning Josias by the man of God at Bethel, 260 years before his birth, which though it were to come to pass so long after, God confirmed it by a sign, which was the renting of the Altar, and the pouring out of the ashes upon it, and the withering of Jeroboams hand. We cannot therefore in reason think that God would set so clear a seal, to any deed which he did intend himself to cancel afterward.

1 Kings 13. 3.

2.

Predictions express Gods inward purpose when the things fore told do exceed all probabilities of second causes; in which case though those words of Tertullian seem very harsh, *credo*
quia

Quia impossibile: yet taking that *impossibility* as relating to *second causes*, and the ground of *faith* to be some *divine prediction*, we see what *reason* there may be for them: For the more *unlikely* the *thing* is to be affected by *second causes*, the greater *evidence* is it that the *Prophets* in *foretelling* it did not respect the *meer order* of *things* in the world, but the *unalterable counsels* of the will of *God*, which therefore would certainly have their *timely accomplishments*. When therefore any *Prophets* did foretell things above the reach of *natural causes*, and those things did not come to pass, it was a certain evidence of a *false prophet*, as the *contrary* was of a *true one*: for none could know so long before-hand such things as were above all *humane power*, but such to whom *God* himself, who alone was able to effect them, did reveal and communicate the *knowledge* of them. And hence we see in *Scripture* those *predictions* which have seemed to carry the greatest *improbabilities* with them, have had the most *punctual accomplishments*, as the *Israelites* returning out of *Egypt* at the end of the 430 years; their *deliverance* by *Cyrus* after the *captivity* in *Babylon*, which seemed so improbable a thing, that when *God* speaks of it, he ushers it in with this preface, that he frustrateth the tokens of the lyars, and maketh the diviners mad, but confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers, that saith to *Jerusalem*, Thou shalt be inhabited, &c. The more unlikely then the thing was to come pass, the greater evidence there was in so clear a *prophecie* of it so long before (above 100 years) and so exact a *fulfilling* of it afterwards precisely at the expiring of the LXX. years from the first *Captivity*.

Exod. 12. 41.

Isa. 44. 25, 26, 28.

Predictions concerning future events, which are confirmed by an oath from *God* himself, do express the *immutable determinations* of *Gods will*. For which we have the greatest assurance we can desire from that remarkable expression of the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*, Heb. 6. 17, 18. Wherein *God* willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the *immutability* of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two *immutable things* in which it was impossible for *God* to lye, we might have a strong consolation, &c. Wherein the *Apostle*

Sect. 6.

3.

obviates and removes all doubts and misprisions, lest God after the declaring of his will should alter the event foretold in it, and that he doth, both by shewing that God hath made an absolute promise, and withal to prevent all doubts, lest some tacite condition might hinder performance, he tells us that God had annexed his oath to it, which two things were the most undoubted evidences of the immutability of Gods counsel. The word *Πεύσεαι* here used, doth in Scripture often note the frustrating of mens hopes and expectations; so is it used *Hab. 3. 17.* *Πεύσεαι ἔργον ἐλπίας*, we render it the labour of the Olive shall fail. So *Hos. 9. 2.* *καὶ ὁ οἶνος ἐλεύσεται ἀνθρώπου, καὶ ἡ καινὴ οἶνος ἐλεύσεται ἐν αὐτῇ.* Thus the meaning here is, that by two immutable things in which it is impossible that God should frustrate the expectations of men, or alter the events of things after he had declared them. For Gods oath is an evident demonstration of the immutability of his will in all predictions, to which this is annexed, and doth fully exclude that which the Scripture calls repenting in God, that is, doing otherwise than the words did seem to express, because of some tacite conditions understood in them. So we find *Psal. 89. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.* *If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the Sun before me.* Wherein we see what way God takes to assure us of the immutability of his Covenant with his people, by the oath which he adjoyns to his promises; whereby God doth most fully express the unalterable determinations of his own will, in that he swears by his own holiness that he would not lie unto David, i. e. that he would faithfully perform what he had promised to him. And therefore Tertullian well saith, *Beati sumus quorum causa Deus jurat, sed miseri & detestabiles sine juranti quidem credimus.* It is happy for us unbelieving creatures, that God stoops so low as to confirm his Covenant with an oath; but it will be sad and miserable for such as dare

dare not venture their *faith* upon it, when *God* hath annexed his *oath* unto it. It is thought by *expositors*, that there is a peculiar *emphasis* in those words אָוֶרָה נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי *Once have I sworn*, thereby noting the *irrevocable nature* of *Gods oath*, that there is no need of *repetition* of it as among men, because when once *God* swears by *himself* it is the highest *demonstration* that no *conditions* whatever shall alter his declared *purpose*. And therefore the *Council of Toledo* well explains the different *nature* of *Gods Oath* and his *repentance* in *Scripture*; *Furare namque Dei est à se ordinata nullatenus convellere; pœnitere verò eadem ordinata cum voluerit immutare*; *God* is said to *swear* when he binds *himself* absolutely to *performance*: and to *repent*, when *things* fall out contrary to the *declaration* of *Gods will* concerning them; for so it must be understood to be only *mutatio sententiæ*, and not *consilii*, that the *alteration* may be only in the *things*, and not in the *eternal purpose* of *God*. But since it is evident in *Scripture*, that many *predictions* do imply some *tacit conditions*, and many *declarations* of *Gods will* do not express his *internal purposes*, it seemed *necessary* in those *things* which *God* did declare to be the *irrevocable purposes* of his *will*, there should be some *peculiar mark* and *character* set upon them for the *confirmation* of his *peoples faith*, and this we find to be the *annexing* an *oath* to his *promises*. Thus it is in that grand *Instrument* of *Peace* between *God* and his *people*, the *Covenant* of *Grace*, wherein *God* was pleased so far to *strengthen* the *faith* of his *people* in it, that he *ratifies* the *articles* of *peace* therein contained, but especially the *Act* of *Grace* on his own part with an *oath*, thereby to *assure* them it was never his *purpose* to *repeal* it, nor to *fail* of *performance* in it. For we are not to think that an *Oath* laies any greater *obligation* upon *God* for *performance*, than the *meer declaration* of his *will*; it being a part of *immutable justice*, and consequently *necessarily implied* in the *Divine nature* to perform *promises* when once made; but *Gods Oath* respects us and not *himself*, viz. that it might be a *testimony* unto us that *Gods will* thereby declared, is his *eternal* and *unchangeable will*, and so the *mercies* thereby *promised* are *sure mercies*: such as are ἀμεταμελήσιζα without any *repentance* on *Gods part*.

Conc. Tolet. 8.
c. 2.

IIa. 55. 3.

Sect. 7.
4.

Predictions made by the Prophets concerning blessings merely spiritual, do express Gods internal purpose, and therefore must have their certain accomplishment in the time prefixed by the Prophets. The grand reason of this Proposition, is that the bestowing of blessings merely spiritual, doth immediately flow from the grace and favour of God, and depend not upon conditions on our part, as procuring causes of them, and therefore there can be no account given why God should suspend the performance of such promises, which would not more strongly have held why he should not have made any such promises at all. And therefore when we see that notwithstanding the highest demerits, God made such free promises, we can have no reason to think that any other demerits interposing between the promises and performance, should hinder the accomplishment of them: unless it be inserted in the promises themselves, which is contrary to the nature of free promises: Upon this ground all the promises relating to the Gospel state, and to the Covenant of grace therein contained, must have their due accomplishment in the time and manner prefixed by the Prophets: and therefore the Jews are miserably blind when they suppose the reason why the promise of the Messias is yet deferred after so long expectation of him, is, the sins of their people; for this seems to suppose that Gods promise of the Messias did depend upon their own righteousness and worthiness above all other people, which if it doth, they are like to be the most miserable and desperate people the world hath: and, besides, if Gods intuition of sin makes him defer the coming of the Messias, his foresight of sin would have hindered him from ever promising a Messias to come: but this was so far from being a hindrance of Gods promise, that the main end of the coming of the Messias was to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. And we see wherever the Prophets insist on the Covenant of grace, the great promise contained in it is the blotting out of transgressions, and remembering sins no more, and that merely on the account of Gods free love and for his own names sake: This can be no reason then why predictions concerning spiritual blessings should not have their exact accomplishment, because there

Cap. 9. 24.

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can be no bar against *free Love*, and the *bestowing* of such *mercies* which do suppose the greatest *unworthiness* of them, as *Gospel blessings* do.

The great difficulty lies in explaining the *Prophetical Phrases* concerning the *Gospel state*, which seem to intimate a greater *advancement* and *flourishing* of *peace* and *holiness* therein, than hath as yet been seen in the *Christian world*; which gives the *Jews* the greater occasion to imagine that the *state* so much spoken of by the *Prophets*, is not yet established in the world. But all the difficulty herein ariseth from the want of consideration of the *Idiotisms* of the *Prophetical language*, especially where it respects the *state of things* under the *Gospel*, concerning which we may observe these following rules.

The *Prophets* under the *Old Testament*, when they speak of things to come to pass in the *New*, do set them forth by the representation of such things as were then in use among themselves; thus the *spiritual worship* of the *Gospel* is prophesied of, under the notion of the *legal worship* among the *Jews*; the conversion of *Agypt* to the *Gospel*, is foretold *Isaiah* 19. 19, 21. by the setting up of an *Altar*, and offering sacrifice to the Lord; and the Conversion of the *Gentiles* in general, by the offering up of incense, *Mal.* 1. 11. and the service of God under the *Gospel*, is set forth by going up to *Jerusalem*, and keeping the feast of *Tabernacles* there, *Zac.* 14. 16. and the plentiful effusion of the *Spirit of God* in the miraculous gifts which attended the preaching of the *Gospel*, is set forth by the *Prophet Joel* 2. 28. by *Propheying* and *dreaming* dreams, and seeing visions; not that these things should really be under *Gospel times*; but that the *Prophets* meaning might be the better understood by those he spake unto, he sets forth the great measure of gifts and *Gospel light* under those things which were accounted as the highest attainments among themselves. So the great measure and degree of holiness which was to be under *Gospel times*, is set forth by the *Prophet Zachary*, *Zach.* 14. 20. by the placing of the motto which was among the *Jews* onely upon the *High Priests* forehead, that this should be so common under the *Gospel*, that even the bells of the horses should bear it, i. e. those things which

1.

seem most remote from a spiritual *use*, should be devoted to it, as the bells were, which were commonly *hanged* upon their war-horses in those mountainous Countries; and in the latter part of that verse, the *height* and *progress* of Gospel holiness is described under that phrase, *that the pots in the Lords house should be as bowls before the Altar, i. e.* should be advanced from a lower and more ignoble service, to a higher and more spiritual degree of holiness. Now the Jews when they observe these and many other Prophetical passages relating to the time of the Messiah to run in the old strain of the Law, they presently conclude that the Messiah must not innovate any thing concerning their way of Worship, but only be some great Prince to give them temporal deliverances, and so expound all these texts in a literal sense, which were only expressed in such a strain, the better to help the capacities of those they spake to them.

2. Things absolutely foretold to come to pass in Gospel times in a general manner, are to be understood comparatively in reference to what was before. For when the measure of either grace or knowledge was so far above what was then among the Jews, that there was scarce any proportion between them, the Prophets made use of such expressions to set it forth by, which might raise up the dull apprehension of the Jews to conceive the just measure and fulness of it. Thus when the Prophets fore-tell the grand increase of spiritual knowledge in Gospel times, they do it in this phrase, they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest, Jer. 31. 33. Where it was far from the Prophets meaning to exclude all use of teaching under the Gospel, (which is contrary to the end of all the Ordinances of the Gospel) but because teaching doth commonly suppose great Ignorance, he sets forth the abundance of knowledge which should be then, by the exclusion of that which doth imply it. So when it is said that they shall all be taught of God, the meaning is not, that every one that lives in the Gospel state, should be thus effectually taught by the Spirit of God; but that the number of such under the Gospel, should so far exceed those under the Law, that they could hardly apprehend the

the *disproportion* between *them*, unless it had been set forth in so large an *expression*. Which leads me to the next rule.

Things fore-told as universally or indefinitely to come to pass under the Gospel, are to be understood as to the duty of all, but as to the event onely of Gods chosen people. Thus when there is so great peace prophesied to be in Gospel times, that then men should beat their swords into plow-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks; that the Wolf should lie down with the Lamb, and Leopard with the Kid; that Nation should not lift up sword against Nation, nor learn war any more; with many others to the same purpose; all these speeches are to be understood of what the nature and design of the Gospel tends to, and what is the duty of all that profess it, and what would effectually be in the Christian world, did all that profess the Christian doctrine, heartily obey the dictates of it, and so far as the Gospel doth prevail upon any, it so far cicurates their wild and unruly natures, that of furious Wolves they become innocent Lambs, and of raging Lions, tender Kids; so far from hurting and injuring others, that they dare not entertain any thoughts of ill will or revenge towards their greatest enemies. And thus we may see, that notwithstanding the seeming repugnancies of the Prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the state of the New, with the events which have been observed in it, yet that all those predictions which concerned the bestowing of the spiritual blessings which concerned the Gospel state, have had their punctual accomplishment in the sense they were intended.

Predictions concerning future events where not onely the thing it self is foretold but the several circumstances of persons, time, and place enumerated, are to have their due accomplishment, and consequently express Gods inward purposes. For those promises or comminations which are capable of alteration by some tacite conditions implied in them, do most commonly run in general terms; or else are spoken by way of immediate address to the persons concerned in order to the stirring them up the more to the duty God aims at by those comminations; as when Jonas limited the Ninivites destruction to forty days. But when Prophecies are recorded,

not:

3.

Isa. 2. 4.

11. 6, 7.

Sett. 9.

4.

not by way of *commination* but meer *prediction*, and particular *circumstances* set down, it stands to *reason* that such *Prophecies* must have their certain *accomplishment* ; and that first, because *God* by setting down the *circumstances* would give them greater *evidences* that the *predictions* came from himself ; as when the *Prophet* at *Bethel* not only foretold the destruction of the *Altar* there, but particularly named the man that should do it, viz. *Josias*. So when *God* by *Isaiah* called *Cyrus* by name, it was doubtless a great *confirmation* to them, that the *deliverance* of the *Jews* should be by that person. Secondly, because these *circumstances* are intended for *Landmarks* to know the certainty of the *accomplishment* of the *Prophecy*. For when they find the *circumstances* fall out exactly according to *prediction*, they have no ground to *question* the *accomplishment* of the *substance* of the *Prophecy*. And hence it was that in the grand *Prophecy* of the coming of the *Messias* all particular *circumstances* were so long before foretold. The first *dawning* of this day being to *Adam* after his fall, when the nature he should be born of was foretold, viz. not *Angelical* but *humane*, of the seed of the woman. To *Abraham* it was further revealed of what *Nation*, of mankind, viz. from his posterity ; to *Jacob* at what time, when the *Scepter* should be departed from *Judah* ; and from what tribe, viz. *Judah* ; to *David* of what *Family* in that tribe, viz. his own ; to *Isaiah* of what *Person* in that *Family*, a *Virgin* ; to *Micah* in what place, viz. *Bethlehem* ; and to *Daniel*, at what precise time, toward the expiring of his seventy weeks ; which according to the most probable computation of them did commence from the seventh year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, and so the 490 years expired near upon our *Saviours* passion. Now certainly the particular enumeration of all these *circumstances* spoken of so long before, and falling out so exactly, could not but give the greatest conviction and evidence, that our blessed *Saviour* was that person so much spoken of by the *Prophets*, in whom all these several lines did meet as in their center.

6.

Lastly, *Predictions* then express divine purposes when many *Prophets* in several ages concur in the same predictions ; because it is hardly seen but all those tacite conditions which are supposed

posed in general promises or comminations may be altered in different ages; but when the conditions alter, and the predictions continue the same, it is a stronger evidence it is some immutable counsel of God which is expressed in those predictions. And in this case one prediction confirms the foregoing, as the Jews say of Prophets; One Prophet that hath the testimony of another Prophet, is supposed to be true; but it must be with this supposition, that the other Prophet was before approved to be a true Prophet. Now both these meet in the Prophecies concerning our Saviour; for to him bear all the Prophets witness; and in their several ages they had several things revealed to them concerning him; and the uniformity and perfect harmony of all these several Prophecies by persons at so great distance from each other, and being of several interests and employments, and in several places, yet all giving light to each other, and exactly meeting at last in the accomplishment, do give us yet a further and clearer evidence that all those several beams came from the same Sun, when all those scattered rays were at last gathered into one body again at the appearance of the Sun of righteousness in the world.

Thus have we now cleared when predictions are expressive of Gods internal purposes; by observation of which rules we may easily resolve the other part of the difficulty when they only express the series and dependencies of things which would have their issue and accomplishment, if God by his immediate hand of providence did not cut off the entail of effects upon their natural causes. Now as to these Prophecies which concern things considered in themselves, and not precisely as they are in the counsel of God, we are to observe these rules.

Sect. 105

1. *Comminations of judgements to come do not in themselves speak the absolute futurity of the event, but do only declare what the persons to whom they are made are to expect, and what shall certainly come to pass, unless God by his mercy interpose between the threatening and the event. So that comminations do speak only the debitum pœnæ and the necessary obligation to punishment; but therein God doth not bind up himself as he doth in absolute promises; the reason is because*

comminations confer no right to any, which absolute promises do; and therefore God is not bound to necessary performance of what he threatens. Indeed the guilt, or obligation to punishment is necessary, where the offence hath been committed to which the threatening was annexed; but the execution of that punishment doth still depend upon Gods arbitrary will, and therefore he may suspend or remove it upon serious addresses made to himself in order to it. For since God was pleased not to take the present forfeiture of the first grand transgression, but made such a relaxation of that penal Law, that conditions of pardon were admissible, notwithstanding sentence passed upon the malefactors, there is strong ground of presumption in humane nature, that Gods forbearance of mankind notwithstanding sin, doth suppose his readiness to pardon offenders upon their repentance, and therefore that all particular threatnings of judgments to come do suppose incorrigibleness in those they are pronounced against: Upon which the foundation of hope is built, that if timely repentance do intervene, God will remove those judgments which are threatened against them.

Sect. II.

Jonah 3. 4.

And this was certainly the case of the Ninivites upon Jonas his preaching among them. For when the threatening was so peremptory, Yet forty daies and Ninive shall be destroyed, all the hope they could have of pardon must be from the general perswasions of mens souls of Gods readiness to remove judgements upon repentance. For otherwise there had been no place for any thing but despair, and not the least encouragement to supplicate the mercy of God, which we see they did in a most solemn manner after they were convinced these comminations came from God himself by the mouth of his Prophet. Some think that Jonas together with the threatening of judgement did intermix exhortations to repentance; but we can find no probability at all for that on these two accounts; first, Jonas then would not have been so unwilling to have undertaken this message; for as far as we can see, the harshness of it was the main reason he sought to have avoided it by flying to Tarshish. Secondly, Jonas would have had no pretence at all for his anger and displeasure at Gods pardoning Ninive; which is most probably

probably conceived to have been, because the *Ninivites* might now suspect him to be no true Prophet, because the event answered not his prediction. Now there had been no reason at all for this, if he had mixed promises together with his threatenings; for then nothing would have fallen out contrary to his own predictions. And therefore it seems evident that the message *Jonas* was sent with, was only the commination of their speedy ruine, which God did on purpose to awaken them the sooner, and with the greater earnestness to repentance, when the judgement was denounced in so peremptory a manner; although it seems *Jonas* had before such apprehensions of the merciful nature of God and his readiness to pardon, that he might suppose Gods intention by this severe denunciation of judgment, might be only to take occasion upon their repentance to shew his goodness and bounty to them. But this was no part of his instructions, which he durst not go beyond in his Preaching, whatever his private opinion might be; for the Prophets were to utter no more in their Preaching or particular messages than was in their commission, and were not to mix their own words with the Word of the Lord.

Jonah 4. 2.

And by this we may further understand the denunciation of death to *Hezekiah* by the Prophet *Isaiah*, Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live. I question not but the Prophet revealed to *Hezekiah* as much as God had revealed to him (for to say as *Molinaus* doth, that the Prophet spake these words of his own head before he fully understood Gods mind, is very harsh and incongruous) but God might at first discover to *Isaiah* not his internal purpose, but what the nature of the disease would bring him to (unless his own immediate hand of providence interposed) which message he would have *Isaiah* carry to *Hezekiah* for the tryal of his faith, and exciting him to the more lively acts of grace, and for a further demonstration of Gods goodness to him in prolonging his life beyond humane probability and the course of second causes. Now what repugnancy is there to the truth and faithfulness of God, that God should conceal from his Prophets in their messages the internal purposes of his will, and in order to the doing good to men should only reveal

Secl. 12.

Isa. 38. 1.

Vates l. 1. c. 6.

what would certainly have come to pass unless himself had otherwise determined it- And thus the repentance which is attributed to God in reference to these denunciations of judgements, is far from importing any real mutation in the internal purposes of God (a rock some have split themselves upon) but it onely signifies the outward changing of the Scene towards men, and acting otherwise than the words of the Prophets did seem to import ; and all the alteration is in the outward discovery of his will, which is certainly far from being any collusion in God : Unless we must suppose God so bound up that he hath no liberty of using his own methods for bringing men to repentance, or for tryal of his people's graces, but must in every instance of his Word declare nothing but his own internal purposes, which is contrary to the general method of Gods dealing with the world, which is to govern men by his own Laws, and thereby to awaken them to duty, and deterr from sin by his annexed threatnings, without revealing any thing of his internal purposes concerning the state and condition of any particular persons at all ; which threatnings of his though pronounced with the greatest severity, do not speak Gods inward resolutions as to any particular person, but what all must expect if they continue impenitent and incorrigible. For the only condition implied in these threatnings being repentance, it necessarily follows that where that is wanting, these hypothetical comminations are absolute predictions of what shall certainly come to pass on all those who are destitute of the condition supposed in them.

Sect. 13.

So that where any comminations are pronounced by any in a propheticall way concerning any person or people, and no alteration happen at all in them, but they continue impenitent and incorrigible, there the not coming of them to pass may be a token of a false Prophet. For in this case the onely tacite condition implied in these threatening Prophccies is supposed to be wanting, and so the comminations must be understood as absolute predictions : Now in those comminations in Scripture, which are absolutely expressed, but conditionally understood, we find something interposing, which we may rationally suppose was the very condition understood. As

Abimelechs.

Abimelechs restoring of Sarah was the ground why the sentence of death after it was denounced, was not executed upon him: So *Ahabs humiliation, Hezekiah his earnest prayer, the Ninivites repentance*, all interposed between sentence and execution, whereby we may be fully satisfied of the reason why these denunciations did not take effect: But where the persons continue the same after threatnings that they were before, there is no reason why the sentence should be suspended, unless we should suppose it to be a meer effect of the patience and long-suffering of God, leading men to repentance and amendment of life: Which is the ground the Jews give, why the not fulfilling of denunciations of judgment was never accounted sufficient to prove a man a false Prophet; to which purpose these words of *Maimonides* are observable in his *Jesude Thorah*, where he treats particularly on the subject of prophecies. If a Prophet foretel sad things, as the death of any one, or famine, or war, or the like, if these things come not to pass, he shall not be accounted a false Prophet; neither let them say, Behold he hath foretold, and it comes not to pass; for our blessed God is slow to anger, and rich in mercy, and repenteth of the evil; and it may be that they repent, and God may spare them, as he did the Ninivites, or defer the punishment, as he did Hezekiah's. Thus we see that Prophetical comminations do not express Gods internal purposes, and therefore the event may not come to pass, and yet the Prophet be a true Prophet.

Gen. 20. 7.
1 King. 21. 19.

Defund. legis,
cap. 10. f. 6.

2. Predictions concerning temporal blessings, do not always absolutely speak the certainty of the event, but what God is ready to do if they to whom they are made continue faithful to him: For which we have sufficient ground from that place of *Jeremiah* 18. 9, 10. At what instant I shall speak concerning a Kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them. So *Isaiah* 1. 19, 20. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it: Whereby we see it evident, that all promises of temporal blessings are not to be taken absolutely, but with the condition of obedi-

Señt. 14.

Ibid. f. 7, 8.

ence. But this the Jews can by no means digest, whose rule is, that all prophecies of good things to come must necessarily come to pass, or he was no true Prophet who spake them: For saith Maimon. Whatever good thing God hath promised, although it be promised under a condition, he never revokes it; and we never find that God repented him of any good thing promised, but in the destruction of the first Temple, when God had promised to the righteous they should not die with the wicked; but he repented him of his words. But it is very plain to any one that considers the Jewish Interpretations of Scripture, that in them they have always an eye to themselves, and will be sure not to understand those Scriptures which seem to thwart their own interest, as is most apparent in the present case; for the grand reason why the Jews insist so much on the punctual accomplishment of all promises of good to be the sign of a true Prophet, is to uphold their own interest in those temporal blessings which are prophesied of concerning them in the old Testament; although one would think the want of correspondency in the event in reference to themselves, might make them a little more tender of the honour of those Prophecies which they acknowledge to be divine; and have appeared to be so in nothing more than the full accomplishment of all those threatnings which are denounced against them for their disobedience, even by the mouth of Moses himself, Deut. 28. from the 15. to the end. Can any thing be more plain and evident, than that the enjoyment of all the privileges conferred upon them, did depend upon the condition of their continuing faithful to Gods covenant? The only place of Scripture produced by them with any plausibility, is that, Jerem. 28. 9. The Prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the Prophet shall come to pass, then shall the Prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him. For reconciling of which place with those already mentioned, we are to understand that here was a particular contest between two Prophets, Hananiah and Jeremiah; Jeremiah he foretold evil to come, though unwillingly, v. 6. Hananiah he prophesied peace. Now Jeremiah, according to Gods peculiar directions and inspiration, appeals to the event to determine whose whole Prophecie was the truest: Now saith Jeremiah, if the Pro-

Prophecie of Hananiah concerning peace be fulfilled, then he is the true Prophet and I the false. And in this case when two Prophet Prophecie contrary things, it stands to reason that God will not reveal any thing by the mouth of his own Prophet which shall not infallibly come to pass, that thereby the truth of his own Prophet may be fully manifested. Besides Jeremiah refers not meerly to the event foretold, but gives a sudden specimen of his own truth in another Prophecie concerning the death of Hananiah, which was punctually accomplished the same year, ver. 17. And which is most considerable to our purpose, both these Prophets considered the same people under the same circumstances; and with the same conditions; and so Jeremiah because of their incorrigibleness foretells desolation certainly to come; notwithstanding this, Hananiah foretells peace and safety, which was contrary directly to Gods method of proceeding, and so the falsity of his Prophecie would infallibly be discovered by the event. So that notwithstanding this instance it appears evident that predictions of temporal blessings do suppose conditions, and so have not always the event fulfilled, when the people do not perform their conditions of obedience. And thus we have now laid down the rules whereby the truth of Prophecies was to be judged; by which it appears what little need the constant Prophets had to appeal to miracles to manifest the certainty of Divine revelation in them. So we have finished our first proposition concerning the manner of trying Divine revelation in the Prophets God sent among his people.

We now come to the second general proposition concerning the Prophets. *Those Prophets whom God did employ upon some extraordinary message for confirming the truth of the religion established by him, had a power of miracles conferred upon them in order to that end. So that we must distinguish the ordinary employment of Prophets which was either instruction or prediction of future events among Gods own people, from their peculiar messages when they were sent to give evidence to the truth of that way of religion which was then settled by Gods own appointment. Now the Prophets generally did suppose the truth of their religion as owned by those they were sent to, and therefore it had been very needless.*

*Sect. 15.
2. Propo.*

needless imploying a power of miracles among them to convince them of that which they believed already. For we never read among all the revolts of the people of the Jews that they were lapsed so far as totally to reject the Law of Moses, (which had been to alter the constitution of their Commonwealth) although they did enormously offend against the Precepts of it, and that in those things wherein the honour of God was mainly concerned, as is most plain in their frequent and gross Idolatry: Which we are not so to understand as though they wholly cast off the worship of the true God, but they superinduced (as the Samaritans did) the worship of Heathens Idols with that of the God of Israel. But when the revolt grew so great and dangerous that it was ready to swallow up the true worship of God, unless some apparent evidence were given of the falsity of those Heathen mixtures, and further confirmation of the truth of the established religion, it pleased God sometimes to send his Prophets on this peculiar message to the main instruments of this revolt: As is most conspicuous in that dangerous design of Jeroboam, when he out of a Politick end set up his two calves in opposition to the Temple at Jerusalem; and therein it was the more dangerous, in that in all probability he designed not the alteration of the worship it self, but the establishment of it in Dan and Bethel. For his interest lay not in drawing of the people from the worship of God, but from his worship at Jerusalem, which was contrary to his design of Cantonizing the Kingdom, and taking the greatest share to himself. Now that God might confirm his peoples faith in this dangerous juncture of time, he sends a Prophet to Bethel, who by the working of present miracles there, viz. the rentening the Altar and withering of Jeroboams hand, did manifest to them that these Altars were displeasing to God, and that the true place of worship was at Jerusalem. So in that famous fire-Ordeal for trying the truth of religion between God and Baal upon mount Carmel by Elijah, God was pleased in a miraculous way to give the most pregnant testimony to the truth of his own worship, by causing a fire to come down from heaven and consume the sacrifice, by which the Priests of Baal were confounded and the people confirmed

1 King. 12. 27.

1 King. 13. 2.]

1 King. 18. 38.

firm'd in the belief of the only true God: for presently upon the sight of this miracle the people fall on their faces and say the Lord he is God, the Lord he is God. Whereby we plainly see what clear evidence is given to the truth of that religion which is attested with a power of miracles. Thus the widow of Sarepta which was in the Country of Zidon, was brought to believe Elijah to be a true Prophet by his raising up her son to life. And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the Word of the Lord by thy mouth is truth. So we see how Naaman was convinced of the true God by his miraculous cure in Jordan by the appointment of Elisha, Behold now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; by which instances it is demonstrable that either the faith of all these persons was built upon weak and insufficient grounds, or that a power of miracles is an evident confirmation of the truth of that religion which is established by them. For this we see was the great end for which God did imploy any of his Prophets to work miracles, viz. to be as an evident demonstration of the truth of what was revealed by him. So that this power of miracles is not merely a motive of credibility, or a probable inducement to remove prejudice from the person, as many of our Divines speak, but it doth contain an evident demonstration to common sense of the truth of that religion which is confirmed by them.

1 King. 18. 39.

1 King. 17. 24.

2 King. 5. 15.

Seet. 16.

And thus we assert it to have been in the case of Moses, the truth of whose message was attested both among the Egyptians and the Israelites by that power of miracles which he had: But herein we have the great Patrons of Moses our greatest enemies, viz. the present Jews; who by reason of their enmity to the doctrine of Christ which was attested by unparallel'd miracles, are grown very shy of the argument drawn from thence: Insomuch that their great Dr. Maimonides lays down this for a confident *Maxime*, משה רבנו לא האמין בו ישראל מפני האותות The Israelites did not believe in Moses our Master for the sake of the miracles which he wrought. Did they not? the more shame for them: and if they did, the more shame for this great Rabbi thus to belie them. But the reason he gives for

De fund. legis. c. 8. f. 1.

it is, because there may remain some suspicion in ones mind, that all miracles may be wrought by a power of Magick or Incantation: Say you so? what, when Moses confounded all the Magicians in Egypt, and made themselves who were the most cunning in these things confess it was the finger of God, and at last give out as not able to stand before Moses? might one still suspect all this to be done by a Magical power? *Credat Judæus Apella, non ego.* This is much like what another of their Doctors says, whom they call the Divine Philosopher, that Elisha his raising the child to life, and curing Naamans leprosie; and Daniels escaping the Lions, and Jonas out of the Whales belly, might all come to pass by the influence of the stars, or by Pythonism. Very probable! but it is most true which G. Vortius there observes of the Jews, *nihil non nugacissimi mortalium fingunt ne cogantur agnoscere virtute ac digito quasi ipsius Dei Jesum nostrum effecisse miracula sua.* All their design in this, is only to elevate the miracles of our blessed Saviour, and to derogate all they can from the belief of them. Hence they tell us that nothing is so easie to be done as miracles; the meer recital of the Tetragrammaton will work wonders, and that by this Jeremiah and our Saviour did all their miracles: It is well yet that he did no more than one of their own Prophets had done before him; but where I wonder do we read that ever the pronouncing of four letters raised one from the dead who had lain four days in the grave? or by what power did Christ raise himself from the dead; (which was the greatest miracle of all) could his dead body pronounce the Tetragrammaton to awaken its self with? But Maimonides further tells us that the miracles which Moses wrought among the Israelites were meerly for necessity, and not to prove the truth of his Divine commission, for which he instanceth in dividing the red sea, the raining of Manna, and the destruction of Corah and his complices. But setting aside that these two latter were the immediate hand of God, and not miracles done by Moses, yet it is evident that the intent of them was to manifest a Divine presence among them: and in the tryal of Corah Moses appeals to Gods immediate Providence to manifest whether God had immediately imployed him.

him or no. For it is evident by the *text*, that the main charge they laid against *Moses* was *ambition and usurpation*; Numb. 16. 13. *Is it a small thing, say they, that thou hast brought us up out of a Land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thy self altogether a Prince over us? Whereby it is evident they thought that Moses acted out of a private design, and aimed at his own honour and authority; which was an imputation of the highest nature that could be alledged against him. Now see how Moses proceeds to clear himself, (which is sufficient to stop the mouths of these incredulous Jews) for he lays the greatest evidence of his Divine commission upon a present miracle. And Moses said, Hereby shall ye know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind; If these men dye the common death of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me, &c.* Can any thing be more plain than that the only intent of this miracle was to make it appear that *Moses* took not his office upon him, but was immediately sent and employed by *God* in what he did. But that which will put an end to this controversy, is *Gods* giving *Moses* a power to work miracles for that very end that the *Israelites* should believe him, Exodus 8. 8, 9. And can we think they would have ever left *Egypt* as they did and followed *Moses* into the wilderness, unless they had been fully convinced he was a deliverer sent from *God*? It is true (that which the *Jews* speak so much of) the *statio in monte Sina* was a great confirmation both to their own faith, and to *Moses* his, according to what *God* had told him, *Exod.* 3. 12. but yet it follows not hence they had no firm bottom for their faith to stand on before (for then they might have been drowned in the red sea as well as the *Egyptians*) but *God* knowing their incredulity and readiness to disobey his Law, did at the promulgation of it testify to their eyes and ears his own presence in the midst of them. And this certainly was one of the greatest miracles of all: and therefore to oppose this to the evidence that is produced by miracles, is only to oppose a power of working miracles to a power of doing them. So vain and empty then, so false and fallacious, yea so directly contrary to holy Scripture is that Axiom of

Ver. 28, 29.

Exod. 19. 9.

the Jews, *Prophetia veritas non confirmatur miraculis*: for miracles are sufficient evidences of Divine revelation in any whom God imployes, to all but such as are resolv'd not to believe them; and as one well saith, *Pertinacia nullum remedium posuit Deus*; God never works miracles to convince obstinate Atheists and wilful Infidels. This now is the first case wherein miracles are to be expected, which is, when God employs any upon an extraordinary message, to be as Credentials, to confirm their Divine commission.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The eternity of the Law of Moses discussed.

The second case wherein miracles may be expected, when a Divine positive Law is to be repealed, and another way of worship established instead of it. The possibility in general of a repeal of a Divine Law asserted: the particular case of the Law of Moses disputed against the Jews; the matter of that Law proved not to be immutably obligatory; because the ceremonial precepts were required not for themselves, but for some further end; that proved from Maimonides his confession: the precepts of the Ceremonial Law frequently dispensed with while the Law was in force. Of the Passover of Hezekiah, and several other instances. It is not inconsistent with the wisdom of God to repeal such an established Law. Abravanel's arguments answered. Of the perfection of the Law of Moses, compared with the Gospel. Whether God hath ever declared he would never repeal the Law of Moses. Of adding to the precepts. Of the expressions seeming to imply the perpetuity of the Law of Moses. Reasons assigned why those expressions are used, though perpetuity be not implied. The Law of Moses not built upon immutable reason; because many particular precepts were founded upon particular occasions, as the customs of the Zabii; many ceremonial precepts thence deduced out of Maimonides: and because such a state of things was foretold, with which the observation of the Ceremonial Law would be inconsistent. That largely discovered from the Prophecies of the Old Testament.

I Now come to the second case wherein miracles may be justly expected, which is, when something which hath been before established by Divine Law, is to be repealed, and some other way of worship to be set up in stead of it. Two things are very necessary to be spoken to for the clearing of this proposition; First, Whether a Law once established by God himself be capable of a repeal; Secondly, What necessity there is

of miracles to manifest Gods intention of repealing a former Law. These two contain the main foundation of the dispute between the Jews and us, viz. whether the Law of Moses was ever to be laid aside, and whether the miracles of our blessed Saviour were sufficient evidences of Gods intention by him to repeal the former Law established by Moses? I begin with the first, whether a Divine Law in general, or the Law of Moses in particular may be abrogated or repealed, after God himself hath made it evident, that the promulgation of it was from himself. This must be confessed the strongest and most plausible plea the present Jews have for their Infidelity, and therefore the eternity of the Law of Moses is made by them one of the fundamental articles of their present Creed, and is pleaded for with the greatest subtilty by their great R. Abravanel, who spends his whole 13 Chapter de capite fidei upon it, but with what success, will be seen in our clearing of it. There are but three things can be supposed as the grounds why a Law once promulged by God himself, should not be capable of repeal; and those are either first, because the things themselves commanded in that Law are of such a nature, that they are not capable of being dispensed with: Or secondly, that it is not consistent with the wisdom of God to repeal a Law once established: Or thirdly, that the reason of the Law continuing alwayes the same, it would argue mutability in God to revoke that Law, and establish another instead of it: If we can therefore demonstrate, that the matter of the Law of Moses is of a positive and mutable nature, that it is suitable to the wisdom of God to alter it, and that sufficient account in reason may be given for the alteration of it, then there can be no imaginable necessity, that a Law once having God for its Author, must therefore derive from him an eternal and immutable obligation.

S. A. 2.

Et it then as to the matter of the Law; and here it must be supposed, that in the matter of controversy between us and the Jews, the question is not of any of those things which are therefore commanded, because they are intrinsically good, as the precepts of the natural or moral Law; but of those things which are therefore only good, because God commands them, i. e. things meerly positive, whose worth and value ariseth not from

from the *intrinsic weight* of the *things*, but from the *external impress* of *divine authority* upon them. Now it is no *question* on either hand whether *God* may require *these things* or no; nor whether *these things* will be *acceptable* unto *God*, so long as he *requires* them; but whether, when once *required*, the *obligation* to them can never cease. Such kind of *things* among the *Jews* we suppose all the *rites* and *cere- monies* of the *Law* to be; viz. *circumcision*, *distinction* of *meats* and *days*, *customs* of *sacrificing*, and such like, and whatever other *Laws* respected them as a *distinct* and *pecu- liar Common-wealth*. All these we say are such as do not carry an *immutable obligation* along with them, and that on these accounts.

First, *Because these things are not primarily required for themselves, but in order to some further end.* Things that are required upon their own account, carry an *indispensable obligation* in them to their performance; but where things are commanded not for themselves, but the *Legislator* doth ex- press some particular grounds of requiring them, there the end and intention of the *Legislator* is the *measure* of their obligation. To which purpose *Maimonides* excellently speaks when he saith, *That the particular manner of worship among the Jews, as sacrifices and oblations, were secundum intentionem secundam Dei, Gods secondary intention and design; but prayer, invocation, and the like, were nearer Gods primary intention: Now, saith he, for the first, they are no further acceptable to God, than as all the circumstances of time, place, and persons are observed, which are prescribed by God himself; but the latter are acceptable in any person, time, or place. And for this cause, saith he, it is that we find the Prophets often re- proving men for their too great sedulity in bringing oblations; and inculcating this to them, that God did not intend these as the principal instances of his worship, and that God did not need any of these things. So 1 Sam. 15. 22. Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams: Isa. 1. 11. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. And especially Jerem. 7. 22, 23. For I spake not to your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, concerning*

I.

More Newb.
p. 3. c. 32.

burnt.

burnt offerings; but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people. Of which words Maimonides saith, *Scrupulum moverunt omnibus, quos mihi videre aut audire contigit*; For say they, How can it be that God did not command them concerning sacrifices, when a great part of the Law is about them? But Maimonides well resolves the doubt thus, That Gods primary intention, and that which he chiefly looked at was obedience; but Gods intention in sacrifices and oblations, was only to teach them the chief thing, which was disobedience. This then is of the number of those things which are spoken absolutely, but to be understood comparatively, as, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice. My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. It is not you that speak, but the Holy Ghost, &c.* So that we see all the goodness which is in these things, is conveyed into them by that which is morally good, which is obedience; and God did never regard the performance of those Laws any further than as it was an expression of obedience, and it was enjoined with those other moral duties which were most agreeable to the Divine nature. And in this sense many understood that difficult place, Ezek. 20. 25. *And I gave them חקיסלם טובים* statutes that were not good, i. e. say they, comparatively with those things which were simply and in themselves good; to which purpose they give this rule, *Aliquid negatur inesse alicui, quod alterius comparatione existimatur exiguum*. But I rather think that which the Chaldee Paraphrast suggests, and others explain further, to be the meaning of that place, viz. that by the precepts that were not good, is meant the cruel and tyrannical impositions of those enemies God for their sins did deliver them over to, which were far from being acceptable to them, which is frequently the sense of good in Scripture. Thus we see one reason why the ceremonial precepts do not in themselves imply an immutable obligation, because they are not commanded for themselves, but in order to a further end.

Señt. 3.

2.

Because God hath frequently dispensed with the ceremonial precepts when they were in greatest force, if the end of them could be attained without them. Thus the precept of circumcision slept during the Israelites travels in the wilderness.

Thus

Thus *David* eat of the *shew-bread*, which is expressly forbidden in the *Law*; the *Jews* think to evade this by distinguishing between the bread of confession in the *Eucharistical offering* mentioned *Leviticus* 7. 13. and the proper *shew-bread*: Now they say *David* eat only of the first, and not of the second; but this is *glossa Aurelianusensis*, which overthrows the *Text*; for it is expressly said, that the ground why the *Priest* gave him *holy bread*, was because there was none there but *לחם הפנים* the *shew-bread*, 1 Sam. 21. 6. A like violation of the *Law* without reproof, is commonly supposed by the *Jews* to have been in the siege of *Jericho*, viz. in the case of the *Sabbath*. But it is more plain in that *Anomalous Passover* observed by *Hezekiah*, which many of the *Jews* themselves acknowledge was not observed as the second *Passover* provided by the *Law* to be celebrated on the 14 day of the second month by those who were debarred of the first for their legal uncleanness; but they suppose it to have been intended for the legal *Passover*; only because the fourteenth of *Nisan* was passed before the sanctification of the Temple was finished, lest they should celebrate none at all that year, they tell us that *Hezekiah* with the consent of the *Rulers*, did make an *Intercalation* that year for a whole month, and so *Nisan* was reckoned of the second *Adar*, and *Jiar* for *Nisan*, from whence they say that *Hezekiah* did intercalate *Nisan* in *Nisan*, that is, added another *Nisan* to the first. But where do we read any such thing permitted in the *Law* as the celebrating the first *Passover* the 14 of the second month? But granting that it was observed as a second *Passover*, because of the want of legal sanctification both in *Priests* and *People*; yet we find great irregularities in the observation of it; for it is expressly said, That a multitude of the people had not cleansed themselves, yet they did eat the *Passover* otherwise than it was written. And yet it is said upon *Hezekiah's* prayer, that the Lord hearkened to *Hezekiah*, and healed every one. So that we see God himself did dispense with the strict ceremonial precepts of the *Law*, where men did look after the main and substantial parts of the worship God required from them. Nay God himself hath expressly declared his own will to dispense with

Exod. 29. 33.

Numb. 9. 11.

2 Chron. 29.
17.

V. Selden. de
Anno civili
Jud. cap. 9.

2 Chron. 30.
18.

V. 20.

Hof. 6. 6.

the *ritual* and *ceremonial Law*, where it comes to stand in competition with such things as have an *internal goodness* in them, when he saith, *he desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings*. Thus we plainly see that the *ceremonial Law*, however positive it was, did yield as to its obligation, when any thing that was *moral*, stood in competition with it. And so the *Jews* themselves suppose an open violation of the *judicial Law* to have been in the hanging up of *Sauls sons* a long time together, directly contrary to *Deut. 21. 23.* which they conceive to have been from the 16. of *Nisan* to the 17 of *Marchesvan*, which is as much as from our *March* to *September*, whereas the *Law* saith expressly that the body of one that is hanged shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day. One of the *Jewish Rabbies*, as *G. Vorstius* tells us, is so troubled at this, that he wisheth that place in *Samuel* expunged out of *Scripture*, that the name of *God* might be sanctified. But whether this were done *פל פידרבור* by the command of the Oracle or no, or whether only by a general permission, we see it was acceptable unto *God*; for upon that the *Gibeonites* famine was removed, and *God* was intreated for the Land. Thus we have now proved that there is no immutable and indispensable obligation which ariseth from the things themselves.

Not. in Abrav.
c. 13.

Sect. 4.

Rosh. Amanana.
c. 13.

Secondly, It is no way inconsistent with the wisdom of *God* to repeal such a *Law* when once established. The main argument of that learned *R. Abravanel*, whereby he would establish the eternity of the *Law of Moses*, is fetched from hence, That this *Law* was the result of the wisdom of *God*, who knows the suitableness of things he appoints to the ends he appoints them for; as *God* hath appointed bread to be the food of mans body: Now we are not to enquire why *God* hath appointed bread and no other thing to be the food of man; no more, saith he, are we to enquire why *God* hath appointed this *Law* rather than another for the food of our souls; but we are to rest contented with the Counsels of *God*, though we understand not the reasons of them. This is the substance of that argument, which he more largely deduceth. To which we answer, that his argument holds good for obedience to all *Gods* positive precepts

cepts of what *kind* or *nature* soever they be, so long as we know their *obligation* to *continue* ; but all the *question* is whether every *positive precept* must *always continue* to *oblige*. And thus far his *similitude* will hold good, that whatever *God* doth *command*, we are to look upon it to be as *necessary* to our *souls*, as *bread* to our *bodies* ; but hence it follows not that our *souls* must be always held to the *same positive precepts*, any more than our *bodies* to the *same kind* of *food*. Nay, as in our *bodies* we find some *kind* of *food* alway *necessary*, but the *kind* of it to *alter* according to *age*, *health*, and *constitutions* ; so we say some *kind* of *Divine revelation* is *always necessary* ; but *God* is graciously pleased to *temper* it according to the *age* and *growth* of his *people* ; so he fed them as with *milk* in their *nonage*, with a *ritual* and *ceremonial Law*, and trained them up by *degrees* under the *Nursery* of the *Prophets*, till the *Church* was grown to *age*, and then *God* fed it with the *strong meat* which is contained in *Gods revelation* of his *will* by the *Gospel* of his *Son*. And therein was abundantly seen *Gods* πολυπείρια & σοφία, his *variegated wisdom*, that he made choice of such *excellent* and *proportionable ways* to his *peoples capacity* to *prepare* them *gradually* for that *full* and *complete revelation* which was reserved for the *time* of the *appearance* of the *true Messiah* in the *world*. For can any thing be more plain than the *gradual progress* of *Divine revelation* from the *beginning* of the *world*? That fair *resemblance* and *portraiture* of *God himself*, and *his will* upon *his word* (if I may so express it) had its *groundwork* laid upon mans *first Apostasie*, in the *promise* made *Gen. 3. 15.* whereon some *further lines* were *drawn* in the *times* of the *Patriarchs*, but it had its ομιωγραφία, it was *shadowed out* the *most* in the *typical* and *ceremonial Law*, but was never *filled up* to the *life*, nor had its perfect ζωογραφία, till the *Son of God* himself *appeared* unto the *world*. If then it be *inconsistent* with the *wisdom* of *God* to *add* any thing to the *Law* of *Moses*, why not to the *revelation* made to *Adam* or the *Patriarchs*? or especially to the *seven precepts* of *Noah*, which they suppose to have been given to all *mankind* after the *flood*? If it were not *repugnant* to the *wisdom* of *God* to *superadd* *rituals* and *ceremonials* to *mo-*

rals and naturals, why shall it be to take down the Scaffolds of Ceremonies, when Gods spiritual Temple the Church of God is come to its full height? Is there not more reason that rituals should give place to substantials, than that such should be superinduced to morals.

Sect. 5.

Psal. 19. 10.

There are only two things can be pleaded by the Jews why it should be more repugnant to the wisdom of God to add to the Law of Moses, than to any former revelation, which are the greater perfection they suppose to be in this revelation above others, and that God in the promulgation of it did express that he would never alter it. But both these are manifestly defective and insufficient in order to the end for which they are produced. For first, what evidence is there that the Law of Moses contained so great perfection in it, as that it was not capable of having any additions made to it by God himself? We speak not now of the perfection of the Moral Law, which it is granted contained in it the foundation of all positive precepts; for this we never contend for the abrogation of, but the ritual Law is that we meddle with; and is it possible any men should be so little befriended by reason as to think this to be the utmost pitch of what God could reveal to the world as to the way of his own worship? Let any indifferent rational person take the precepts of the Gospel, and lay them in the ballance with those of the Ceremonial Law, and if he makes any scruple of deciding on which side the over weight lies, we may have cause to suspect him forsaken of that little reason which gave him the name of man. Let but the fifth of Matthew be laid against the whole book of Leviticus, and then see whether contains the more excellent precepts, and more suitable to the Divine nature? I speak not this to disparage any thing which had once God for the Author of it, but to let us see how far God was from the necessity of natural agents to act to the height of his strength in that discovery of his Will. God is wise as well as righteous in all his ways; as he can command nothing but what was just; so he will command nothing but what is good, nay excellent in its kind. But though all the Stars be in the same firmament, yet one star differs from another in glory; though they may be all pearls, yet some may be more

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orient than others are ; every place of holy Scripture may have its *Crown*, but some may have their *aurcola*, a greater excellency, a fuller and larger capacity than the other hath ; every parcel of Divine revelation may have some perfection in its kind, yet there may be some *monstra perfectionis* in Scaligers expression, that may far outvie the glory and excellency of the rest. Can we think the mists and umbrages of the Law could ever cast so glorious a light as the Sun of righteousness himself in his Meridian elevation ? As well may we think a dark shady passage more magnificent and glorious than the most Princely Palace , a Picture drawn in Charcoal more exquisite and curious than the lines of Apelles, some imperfect rudiments more exact and accurate than the most elaborate work, as go about to compare the Law of Moses with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in point of excellency and perfection. Let the Jews then boast never so much of their *gradus Mosaicus*, and how much it exceeds the degree of revelation in other Prophets, we know if his light be compared with what the Gospel communicates, Moses himself saw but as in a glass darkly, and not in *speculo lucido*, as the Jews are wont to speak. We honour Moses much, but we have learnt to honour him at whose transfiguration he was present more ; neither can that be thought any disparagement to him who accounted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.

But it may be, though the Law in it self be not so absolutely perfect, yet God may have declared he will never alter it, and then it is not consistent with Divine wisdom to repeal it. Very true : God will never alter what he hath said he will not ; but where is it that he hath thus bound up himself ? Is it in that noted place to this purpose, *Thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it* ? So indeed Maimonides argues ; but therein more like a Jew than himself ; and yet one of his own Nation therein far more ingenuous than he, gives a most sufficient answer to it, which is R. Jos. Albo. whose words are thus produced by Vorstius and others ; the Scripture only admonisheth us, that we should not add to nor diminish from Gods commands according to our own wills ; but what hinders saith he, but God himself may according to his own wisdom add

Seet. 6.

Deut. 12. 32.
De fund. leg. c.
9. s. 1. 1kk4-
rim. l. 3. c. 14.

or diminish what he pleaseth? But are they in good earnest when they say *God* bound up himself by this speech? whence came then all the *Prophetical* revelations among the *Jews*? did these add nothing to the *Law of Moses*, which was as much the *will of God* when revealed by them, as any thing was revealed by *Moses* himself? or will they say that all those things were contained for the substance in the *Law of Moses*, as to what concerned *Practice*? very true; but not in the *Ceremonial*, but the *Moral Law*; and so we shall not stick to grant that the whole duty of man may be reduced to that. But if adding to the precepts be the doing of *Gods* commands in another way than he hath prescribed, and diminishing from them be meerly not to do what *God* hath commanded, as some conceive, then these words are still more remote from the sense affixed on them by the incredulous *Jews*. For why may not *God* himself add to his own *Laws* or alter the form of them, although we are always bound directly to follow *Gods* declared will? May not *God* enlarge his own will, and bring his *Scholars* from the rudiments of their nonage to the higher knowledge of those who are full grown? or must the world of necessity do that which the old *Roman* so much abhorred, *senescere in elementis*, wax gray in learning this *A, B, C*? or was the *Ceremonial Law* like the *China* Characters, that the world might spend its age in conning of them? But it appears that there was no other meaning in that strict prohibition, than that men should not of their own heads offer to find out new ways of worship as *Jeroboam* did, but that *Gods* revelation of his own will in all its different degrees was to be the adequate rule of the way and parts of his own worship. And I would fain know of the *Jews* whether their own severe and strict prohibitions of things not at all forbidden in the *Law of God*, and that on a religious account, as *סיני לחורר* a boundary to the *Law*, come not nearer the adding to *Gods* *Law*, than *Gods* own further declaration of his will doth? All the dispute then must be, not whether *God* may add to his own *Law*, but whether the *Gospel* be a prohibited addition to the *Law of Moses*, that is, whether it be only the invention of men? or it be the express declaration of the will of *God*? As to which contro-

versie,

versie, he is no true *Christian* who dare not readily joyn issue with them, and undertake to prove by all the arguments by which they believe the *Law of Moses* to have been of *Divine revelation*, that the *Gospel of Christ* is a clear manifestation of the *Will of God*. But of that afterwards.

From hence it is evident that *God* hath not by this place tyed up himself from any further manifestation of his mind beyond the *Law of Moses*; but it may be they may put greater confidence in those expressions which seem necessarily to imply a perpetual and unalterable obligation in the *Law of Moses*. For, saith the late learned Rabbi Manasse Ben Israel, *If by such expressions as those are used in Scripture which seem to import the perpetuity of the Law of Moses, somewhat else should be meant than they seem to express; what did Moses and the Prophets in using them but lay a stumbling-block in the ways of men, whereas they might have spoken clearly, and told us there should a time come when the Ceremonial Law should oblige no longer?* This being a charge of so high a nature, must not be dismissed without a particular enquiry into the expressions which are the ground and reason of it. The places most insisted on by the *Jews*, are *Deut. 29. 29.* Things which are revealed belong to us and to our children ער עולם for ever. So *Levit. 23. 14.* the precept of offering the first-fruits is there called חקת עולם a statute for ever; and that of the *Passover*, *Exodus 12. 17.* where the same expression is used. From hence they infer that no alteration can happen as to the *Ceremonial Law*, since *God* himself hath declared that it shall continue for ever. To this common argument of the *Jews*, it is in general replied, that the word in which the main force of the argument lies, doth not carry with it an absolute perpetuity, but it signifies according to the subject it is joyned with. So when it is applyed to *God*, it signifies eternity, not so much from the meer importance of the word, as from the necessary existence of the *Divine nature*. Thence *Maimonides* himself can say, *Proinde sciendum est quod Olam non necessario significet aternitatem, nisi ei conjungatur Ed (ער vel ער) idque vel post illud ut Olam vaed, vel ante Ad Olam.* Although this rule of his hath no certainty at all in it, as appears from his collection of.

Seet. 7.

Concil. in Levit. 9. 7.

More Nevoch: p. 2. c. 22.

of it, which is because it is said, *Psal. 10. 16. The Lord he is King Olam vaed, for ever and ever*: but as I said already, that is not from the signification of the word, but the nature of the thing. And it is most plain in Scripture that **עולם** is so far from implying a necessary perpetuity, that it is applied to such things as can have no long duration, as *Exodus 21. 6. and he shall serve him לעולם* that is, (as the Jews themselves expound it) to the next Jubilee though it were near or far off. So *1 Samuel 1. 22. where Samuel is said to abide before the Lord ער עולם for ever*, where we find *Maimonides his Ad Olam* in a sense very far short of eternity; this is so plain that the formerly cited *R. Joseph Albo* doth in terms confess it, and produceth a multitude of other places to the same purpose. For which though he be sufficiently censured by his Brethren, yet we may see there may be some ingenuity left in a Jewish Rabbi, even in the grand dispute concerning the eternity of the Law of Moses.

Sect. 8.

All the difficulty now is to assign some rational accounts why such precepts which God did not intend should be always obligatory, yet should be enforced upon them in such expressions which may seem at least to imply a perpetuity. Of which these may be given. First, That these precepts to which these expressions are annexed, should not be looked on as meer ambulatory Laws that did only concern them in their travels through the Wilderness, and not continue obligatory when they were settled in Canaan. For which purpose we are to observe, that though all the Laws were given in one body in the Wilderness, yet the obligation to all of them did not commence at the same time, neither were they to continue for the same duration; these three sorts of precepts may be observed among them; first such as concerned them only in the present condition, as that about the Tabernacle, which was then a moveable Temple among them, suitable to their condition; but when they were settled, God was to have a settled house too. So that precept of going without the camp, *Deut. 23. 12.* had an immediate respect to their peregrination. Secondly, such precepts as were given them, but they were not bound to perform them till their settlement in Canaan, as driving out the Canaanites, *Numb. 33. 52.*
building

building the Temple in the place which God should choose, erecting judicatories in their several Cities, choosing a King, &c. Thirdly, there were such precepts as concerned them where ever they were, whether in the wilderness or in Canaan; now these are the precepts which are said to be perpetual. This is the account given of it by *H. Grotius*; but because this may be lyable to some exceptions, I therefore add, Secondly, That the reason of those expressions being annexed to the precepts of the Ceremonial Law, is, because they were to continue obligatory till such a remarkable period of time came which should alter the state of things among them. And such a period of time the coming of the *Messias* is by themselves supposed to be, when in their famous computation they make three *Epoche's* before the Law, under the Law, and the coming of the *Messias*. And it is evident yet by them, that they do still expect a wonderful alteration of the State of things when the *Messias* comes; doth it not therefore stand to reason that מָלְכוּת should be added to such things which were to continue till so great an alteration as should be on the coming of the *Messias*, especially if the coming of the *Messias* had been deferred so long as they falsely suppose it to be? But however, granting that a new series of times or אֵינֶם is to commence from the *Messias*, there is very great reason why that expression should be added to those things which were to continue as long as the אֵינֶם did, i. e. till *Messias* came, which we freely acknowledge. And in this sense is מָלְכוּת often taken for such a duration of things which had some remarkable period to conclude it, as in the case of the Jubilee, in the servant mentioned, and the special employment which God called *Samuel* to, in this case, as to the event, or the end of his life in *Hammah's* designation, when she said he should attend upon the Lord for ever. Thirdly, These precepts are said to endure for ever, which would still have continued obligatory, unless God himself had altered the obligation of them, by a new revelation of his will. For in this case it is most certain that all positive precepts coming immediately from God, do carry with them an unalterable obligation, unless the Legislator himself do in as evident a way repeal them as he did once establish them; that

*De Verit. Rel.
Christ. l. 5. s. 7.*

is, in such *Laws* which depend meerly upon *Gods positive* and *arbitrary will*. For in this case *God* allows none to alter any thing concerning his *Law*; but *indispensable obedience* is our duty till *God* himself repeal his former *Laws*. And this we assert to be the case in the *Gospel*. So that it appears plainly that it implies nothing inconsistent with the wisdom of *God* to repeal an established positive *Law*, though some expressions to prejudiced minds seem to imply a perpetuity in it.

317. 9.

We come therefore to the *third thing* which may make a positive *Law* unalterable, which is, when the reason of it is immutable; for then, say they, it would argue mutability in *God* to repeal it. If we can therefore make it evident that the ceremonial *Law* was not established on an immutable reason, and that the reason on which it was established doth suppose a state of things to come, in which it should expire, then there cannot be the least pretence of mutability in *God* on the repeal of such a *Law*. First, That it was not established upon an immutable reason: The immutable reason of a *Law* must either be fetched from the nature of the things commanded, or the grounds of the establishing of it; we have already proved that the nature of the positive precepts of the ceremonial *Law* do not carry in them an intrinsic goodness. And here the Sophistry of the *Jews* is apparently discovered, that when they are pressed with this, they take sanctuary in the *Decalogue*, or some spiritual precepts, which comprehend in them the general foundation of the *Law*, as *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.* whereas these are very remote from the matter in controversy, which concerns not what precepts were moral in their *Law*, but what were purely ceremonial; which were so far from being founded on an immutable reason, that the particular occasion of the giving of many of them, is particularly assigned by their own Writers; especially in the main parts of the ceremonial worship of *God* among them, the reasons of which *Maimonides* saith may be deduced from the customs of the *Zabaites*, the knowledge of whose opinions and customs, he tells us, is porta magna ad reddendas preceptorum causas, gives much light to the *Law* of *Moses*; and

More Nervoeb.
632. cap. 29.

par-

particularly of himself he saith, *quod multarum legum rationes & causæ mihi innatuerint ex cognitione fidei, rituum & cultus Zabiorum*; that he came to the right understanding of many of the *Laws* of *Moses* by his knowledge in the rites and customs of these *Zabai*sts. Granting therefore the hypothesis of this learned Rabbi, that the precepts of the Law had most of them a particular respect to the Idolatrous customs of these people; what will hence follow but only this, that the reason of the ceremonial precepts did respect the customs in use when they were given, and so are not founded upon an immutable reason? And the more the precepts are whose reason is to be fetched from hence, the more plain and evident is the thing we intended by it, viz. that the ceremonial Law is not founded upon an unalterable reason.

Now from this one head of the Idolatrous customs of those Nations about them hath that learned Author deduced the reasons of very many of the most obscure commands of the ceremonial Law: As that concerning rounding the corners of their heads, which *Herodotus* tells us was the custom of the *Arabians*, and others of the *Babylonian Priests*; by both which the *Zabii* may be meant, the superstition of the *Zabii* being *Chaldean*, as I have shewed already, and their name, as some conceive, from *Saba* the son of *Chus*, whose posterity were seated in *Arabia*, near to the red Sea; and that which confirms this opinion, is, that the *Sabeans* did as *Philostorgius* saith, worship the Sun and Moon, as the *Zabai*sts did in *Maimonides*; and withal *Bochartus* makes it evident from *Strabo*, that some of the *Babylonians* called *Ger-rhai*, possessed themselves of the Country of the *Sabeans*, whereby this originally *Chaldaick* superstition might spread it self in these parts near the confines of *Judea*, which might be the cause why all those rites which were used by these Idolatrous people, are so severely forbidden to the *Jews*: God thereby setting up a wall of separation between his people and the Nations round about them, by making the customs of the *Jews* almost *Antipodes* to theirs; as those of *Japan* are to them of *China*. Upon the same ground it is supposed that other precept was made against wearing a garment of linnen and wollen, because the Idolatrous Priests used to go

Seet. 10.

Levit. 19. 27.
V. Voss. in
Maim. de Idol.
c. 12.

Phaleg. l. 4.
cap. 8.

Lev. 19. 19.

- More Nevoch.*
l. 3. c. 37.
Deut. 22. 5.
- V. Selden de*
Diis Syris, synt.
2. cap. 4.
- Lev. 19. 19.*
Lev. 19. 23.
Lev. 19. 24, 25.
Lev. 20. 2, 3.
Gen. 9. 4.
- More Nevoch.*
p. 3, c. 48.
- so cloathed, as Maimonides tells us out of their books, and likewise that prohibition of a womans wearing the arms of a man, and a mans wearing the garments of a woman, is very probably supposed to have had its original from that Idolatrous custom mentioned by the same Author, ut vir gestet Vestimentum muliebri coloratum quando stat coram stella Veneris; similiter ut mulier induat lorica & arma bellica quando stat coram stella Martis; but that Author doth not deny a further reason to be couched in it for the preservation of publick honesty. Many other precepts are drawn from the same fountain by that same Author, as the sowing of divers seeds in the same ground; the forbidding the eating of the fruit of their trees for the first three years after they came to Canaan; that being the furthest time wherein the trees of their own plantation would begin to bear in that Country. Now it was the custom of all those Idolatrous people, that the first time any tree did bear, part of the fruit was to be burnt up in an offering to the Idol, and the other part eaten in the Idol Temple; or else they supposed their trees would never prosper: Now in opposition to this, God bids them bring the fruit of the fourth year to him, and eat of the fifth themselves, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof. So the Idolaters threatned all parents that their children would never live, unless they caused them to pass through the fire; from which custom Maimonides saith, some even in his time would take the children that were new born, and move them up and down over a fire wherein Odoriferous smells were cast: Thence comes that strict prohibition of giving the children to Moloch, which was by that custom of passing through the fire. To this same Head, the same Author refers that of not eating the member of a living creature, which we render flesh with the life thereof; which was forbidden, as he elsewhere tells us, not only for avoiding cruelty, but because the Heathen Nations were wont in their Idolatrous Feasts to take a member off from a living creature, and eat it afterwards; and in them likewise he supposeth they used the boiling the flesh and the milk together, which, saith he, besides that it affords a most gross nourishment, savours of their Idolatrous practices too, and therefore, saith he, it is observable that twice where this precept*

cept is mentioned, it follows that of the Solemn appearance of the Moles at Jerusalem thrice a year, whereby it seems to be implied that this action had relation to some great solemnity. These and several other precepts of the Law of Moses are deduced by that very learned Rabbi from Idolatrous customs, as the occasions of them; which seem to have the more reason in them, because that God did in the general so strictly forbid the Jews to walk after the custom of the Nations about them. Thence Origen takes notice of the τὸ ξενίζον τῷ νόμῳ, καὶ τὴν ἰδιότροπον κατ' αὐτὸς παλίσταν; for which he saith, they were διαβεβλημένοι, reproached by the Heathens, because their Laws and Polity were so different from the custom of other Nations. Thus we see then that many precepts of the Ceremonial Law were founded, neither on the goodness of the things themselves, nor on any unalterable reason, but were enforced on a peculiar reason on the people of the Jews at that time, as they were a people separated from the rest of the world for the worship of the true God. And for the other great offices wherein their Religion did so much consist, viz. Sacrifices, distinction of meats, observation of Festivals, circumcision, and such like, the particular account and reason of them is either evident in the Law it self, or so fully acknowledged by their own Writers, that it is here superfluous to insist on them: Especially since so many have done that so largely already (particularly Grotius.) whose Labours I intend not to transcribe.

Exod. 23. 17.
19. 34. 26.
Lev. 20. 23.
c. Celsus. l. 4.

De veri. Rel.
Christiana. l. 5.
Sect. 11.

I come therefore to the second thing, which is, that the Ceremonial Law was so far from being founded on an immutable reason, that while it was in its greatest force such a state of things was plainly foretold, with which the observation of that Law would be inconsistent. For which we are to consider, that though the Law of Moses seemed outwardly to respect the temporal advantages of the people embracing it in the Land of Canaan; yet there was a Spring of Spiritual Promises whose head was higher than Jordan was, that ran down from the Patriarchs, and was more fully opened to some of them, which though it seemed to run under ground in the midst of the Ceremonial observations

tions of the Law ; yet it frequently brake forth and opened it self in the midst of them, and by degrees in the Prophetical Age did make it self a larger Channel , till in the time of the Messias by its force and violence it overthrew those banks which stood in the way of it, and overspread the face of the whole earth. It is evident by the whole series of the Scripture of the Old Testament , that Gods ultimate intention was not to confine the saving knowledge of his will only to the Jews ; for the great promise to Abraham was, *That in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed ;* And as Abraham rejoiced to see that day afar off ; so good Jacob when he leaned on his Jacobs staff, took the height of that day far from on high , which though like some of the fixed stars , might not for some time be visible to the inferior world ; yet he foretold the time when he should descend into a lower orb, and become conspicuous in our Horizon. And consequently to his appearance in the world , would be the drawing not so much the eyes as the hearts of the world to him ; for no sooner is it mentioned that *Shiloh comes when the Scepter departs from Judah ;* but it immediately follows , *and to him shall the gathering of the people be.* Thus we see before ever the Law of Moses came to inclose the people of the Jews as Gods peculiar people , there was a design on foot, for enlarging the bounds of Gods inheritance, and making the uttermost parts of the earth his Sons possession. Can we then think that the Law which came afterwards, could disanul the Covenant made 430 years before, as the Apostle excellently reasons ? Can we believe the Mosaical dispensation was the utmost of what God did intend, when God had before promised that the blessing of Abraham should come upon us Gentiles also ? To which purpose it is very observable that Abraham was justified not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision ; for he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, being uncircumcised ; that he might be the Father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised ; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also. Whereby it is evident that the great blessings promised to Abraham, did not respect him merely as Progenitor of the Israelites, but in a higher capacity,

Gen. 49. 10.

Gál. 4. 17.

Rom. 4. 10, 11.

city, as *Father of the faithful*; and that the ground of his acceptance with God did not depend on any *Ceremonial Rite*, such as *circumcision* was, God *imputing* his faith for *righteousness* before his being *circumcised*. But because the time was not yet come wherein the grand *mysterie* of mans *salvation* by the death of the Son of God was to be revealed; therefore when God called the Nation of the Jews from their *bondage*, he made choice of a more *obscure* way of representing this *mysterie* to them through all the *umbrages* of the Law: And withal inforced his *precepts* with such *terrible sanctions* of curses to all that continued not in all that was written in that Law to do it, to make them the more apprehensive that the ground of their acceptance with God, could not be the performance of the precepts of that Law, but they ought to *breath* after that *higher dispensation* wherein the way and method of mans *salvation* should be fully revealed when the *fulness of time* was come. Now therefore God left them under the *Tutorage* and *Padagogy* of the Law, which spake so *severely* to them, that they might not think this was all God intended in order to the *happiness* of men, but that he did *reserve* some *greater thing* in store to be enjoyed by his people when they were come to *age*.

So that though the *ceremonies* of the Law had not a *Sect. 12.* mouth to speak out *Christ*; yet they had a hand to point to him; for they were the *shadow* or dark representation of that which was to be drawn afterwards to the greatest life. And this was understood by all those whose hearts were carried beyond the outward, *sapless Letter* of the Law; to the more inward and *spiritual meaning* of it (there being an *ἐσωτερικὰ* & *ἐξωτερικὰ* in the Law as well as *Philosophy*) and these *mysteries* were not so *veiled* and *hidden*, but all that were *ἐπίσταται* fully initiated, might fully understand them; which made up that true *spiritual Cabala*, which was constantly preserved among the true *Israelites*, which was more largely commented on by the *Prophets* of succeeding Ages; whose care it was to *unlock* this *Cabala*, and to raise up the hearts of the people in a *higher expectation* of the great things which were to come. Thence we not only read of the solemn prayer of the Church of the Jews, that the know-
ledge.

- ledge of God might be dispersed over all the Nations of the earth, but we have many prophecies that when the mountain of the Lords house should be exalted, all Nations should flow unto it : that from the rising of the Sun to the going down thereof, Gods name should be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense should be offered to his name, and a pure offering ; for his name shall be great among the Heathen. That the Inscription on the High Priests forehead, Holiness to the Lord, should by reason of the large diffusion of a Spirit of Holiness in the days of the Gospel, be set upon the bells of Horses, and that the pots in the Lords house should be as bowls before the Altar, i. e. that when the Levitical service should be laid aside, that Holiness which was then appropriated to the Priests and Instruments of the Temple, should be discerned in those things which seemed most remote from it. That a Priesthood after another order than that of Aaron should be established, viz. after the order of Melchisedek ; and that he that was the Priest after this order, should judge among the Heathen, and wound the heads over many Countries ; that in the day of his power the people should (not be frightened to obedience with thunderclaps, and earthquakes, as at Mount Sinai, but should) come and yield themselves as a free-will offering unto him, and yet their number be as great as the drops of the dew which distill in the morning. That God out of other nations would take unto himself for Priests and for Levites ; that the desire of all Nations should speedily come ; that the Messenger of the Covenant should come into his Temple ; nay that seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy City ; that then the vision and prophecies should be sealed up ; that the Sacrifice and oblation should be caused to cease ; that the City and the Sanctuary should be destroyed, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the War desolations are determined ; that after threescore and two weeks Messias should be cut off, but not for himself ; that by him transgression should be finished, and reconciliation for iniquity should be made, and everlasting righteousness should be brought in. And lest all these things should be apprehended to be only a higher advancing of the Levitical worship, and the way of
- Psal. 67. 2.
- Isa. 2. 2.
- Mal. 1. 11.
- Zach. 14. 20.
- Psal. 110. 4, 5, 6.
- Verf. 3.
- Isa. 66. 21.
- Hag. 2. 7.
- Mal. 3. 1.
- Dan. 9. 24, 26, 27.

of external Ceremonies, God expressly saith, that he would make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers, in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the Land of Egypt, which my Covenant they brake, although I was an husband to them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those dayes, saith the Lord; I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Can any one that now considers seriously the state of things thus described as it should come to pass, ever imagine that the Levitical service was ever calculated for this State? Was Gods Worship to be confined to his Temple at Jerusalem, when all the Nations of the earth should come to serve him? Was the High Priest to make an attonement there, when an order of Priesthood different from the Aaronical should be set up? Must the Tribe of Levi only attend at the Temple when God should take Priests and Levites out of all Nations that serve him? What would become of the Magnificence and glory of the Temple when both City and Sanctuary shall be destroyed, and that must be within few propheticall weeks after the Messias is cut off? And must the Covenant God made with the Israelites continue for ever, when God expressly saith, he would make a New one, and that not according to the Covenant which he made with them then? It is so evident then, as nothing can well be more, that under the Old Testament, such a state of Religion was described and promised, with which the Levitical worship would be inconsistent, and so that the Ceremonial Law was not at first established upon an immutable reason, which was the thing to be proved.

Jer. 31. 31, 32.

CHAP. VIII.

General Hypotheses concerning the Truth of the Doctrine of Christ.

The great prejudice against our Saviour among Jews and Heathens, was the meanness of his appearance. The difference of the miracles at the delivery of the Law and Gospel. Some general Hypotheses to clear the subserviency of miracles to the Doctrine of Christ. 1. That where the truth of a doctrine depends not on evidence, but authority, the only way to prove the truth of the Doctrine, is to prove the Testimony of the revealer to be infallible. Things may be true which depend not on evidence of the things. What that is, and on what it depends. The uncertainty of natural knowledge. The existence of God, the foundation of all certainty. The certainty of matter of faith proved from the same principle. Our knowledge of any thing supposeth something incomprehensible. The certainty of faith as great as that of knowledge; the grounds of it stronger. The consistency of rational evidence with faith. Yet objects of faith exceed reason; the absurdities following the contrary opinion. The uncertainty of that which is called reason. Philosophical dictates no standard of reason. Of transubstantiation and ubiquity, &c. why rejected as contrary to reason. The foundation of faith in matters above reason. Which is an infallible Testimony; that there are ways to know which is infallible, proved. 2. Hypoth. A Divine Testimony the most infallible. The resolution of faith into Gods veracity as its formal object. 3. Hypoth. A Divine Testimony may be known, though God speak not immediately. Of inspiration among the Jews, and Divination among the Heathens. 4. Hypoth. The evidences of a Divine Testimony must be clear and certain. Of the common motives of faith, and the obligation to faith arising from them. The original of Infidelity.

Seet. 1.

HAVING now cleared that the Law of Moses was capable of a *reſca'*, I come to the second enquiry, whether the miracles

miracles of our Saviour did give a sufficient evidence of his power and authority to repeal it. I shall not (to prevent too large an excursion) insist on any other evidences of our Saviours being the promised *Messias*, but keep close to the matter of our present debate concerning the evidence which ariseth from such a power of *Miracles* as our Saviour had in order to his establishing that doctrine which he came to publish to the world. The great stumbling block in reference to our blessed Saviour among both the *Jews* and learned *Heathens*, was the meanness of his appearance in the world, not coming attended with that state and magnificence, which they thought to be inseperable from so great a person. The *Jews* had their senses so possessed with the thundrings and lightnings on mount Sinai, that they could not imagine the structure of their Ceremonial worship could be taken down with less noise and terror than it was erected with. And withal collecting all those passages of the *Old Testament* which seemed to foretell such glorious things of the dayes of the *Messias*, (which either refer to his second coming, or must be understood in a spiritual sense) they having their minds oppressed with the sense of their present calamities, applyed them wholly to an external greatness, whereby they might be delivered from the Tyranny of the *Roman Power*. The *Heathens* as appears by *Celsus* and others, thought it very strange that the Son of God should appear in the world with so little grandeur, and have no greater Train than twelve such obscure persons as the *Apostles* were. For saith *Celsus*, ὡς περὶ ὁ ἡλιος πάντα τὰ ἀλλὰ ῥαπίζων φωστὸν αὐτὸν διακινύει, ἕτως ἐρεβὼ περιουμένῳ τὸ ἴδον τῷ θεῷ. As the Sun which enlightens all other things, doth first discover himself, so it was fitting the Son of God should do when he appeared to the world. And so we say he did to all such whose minds were not blinded through obstinacy and wilful ignorance. For although this Sun of righteousness was pleased for the better carrying on his design in the world to wrap up himself in a cloud, yet his glory could not be confined within it, but did break through that dark vail of his humane nature, and did discover it self in a most clear and convincing manner. His appearances indeed were not like those upon Mount Sinai, because his design was not to

Apud Orig. l. 2.

amuse men with the *glory* of his *Majesty*, and to terrise them from *Idolatry*, (which was a great reason of those dreadful phenomena at the delivery of the Law) but he came to draw all men to him by the *power* and *energy* of his *Grace*, and therefore afford them all *rational convictions* in order to it. And therefore the *quality* of our *Saviours* *miracles* was *considerable* as well as the *greatness* of them; The *intent* of them all was to *do good*, and thereby to bring the world off from its *sin* and *folly*, to the *embracing* of that *holy doctrine* which he came to publish to the world.

Sett. 2.

Now that such a *power* of *miracles* in our *Saviour* had the greatest subserviency to the giving full and *convincing evidence* that he was the *person* he declared himself to *be*, and that his *doctrine* was thereby so clearly attested, that it was nothing but *obstinacy*, which could withhold *assent*, will appear by these following Hypotheses which I lay down in order to the proving it.

Hyp. 1.

Where the truth of a *doctrine* depends not on the evidence of the things themselves, but on the authority of him that reveals it, there the only way to prove the *doctrine* to be true, is to prove the *Testimony* of him that revealed it to be *infallible*. Several things are necessary to be proved for the clearing this proposition.

1. That it is not repugnant to reason that a *doctrine* should be true which depends not upon the evidence of the thing itself. By evidence of the thing I understand so clear and distinct a perception of it, that every one who hath the use of his *rational faculties*, cannot but upon the first apprehension of the terms yield a certain *assent* to it; as that the whole is greater than a part; that if we take away equal things from equal, the remainder must be equal. Now we are to observe, that as to all these common notices of humane nature which carry such evidence with them, the certainty of them lyes in the proposition as it is an act of the mind abstracted from the things themselves; for these do not suppose the existence of the things; but whether there be any such things in the world or no as whole or parts, the understanding is assured that the *Idea* of the whole carries more in its representation than that of a part does. This is the great reason of the certainty and evidence

dence of *Mathematical* truths, not as some *imagine*, because *men* have no *interest*, or *design* in those *things*, and therefore they never *question* them, but because they *proceed* not upon *sensible* but *abstracted* matter, which is not *lyable* to so many *doubts* as the other is; for that a *Triangle* hath three *Angles* no man *questions*; but whether such *sensible* parts of matter make a *Triangle*, may be very *questionable*. Now that the *truth* of *beings*, or the *certainty* of *existence* of *things* cannot be so certain as *Mathematical* *demonstrations*, appears from hence: because the *manner* of *conveyance* of these *things* to my *mind* cannot be so *clear* and *certain* as in purely *intellectual* operations, *abstracted* from *existent* matter. For the highest *evidences* of the *existence* of *things* must be either the *judgement* of *sense*, or *clear* and *distinct* *perception* of the *mind*; now *proceeding* in a *meer* *natural* way, there can be no *infallible* *certainty* in either of these; For the *perception* of the *mind* in reference to the *existence* of *things* being caused so much through those *Idea's* or *Phantasmes* which are *conveyed* to the *understanding* through the *impressions* of *sense*, if these may be *demonstrated* to be *fallacious*, I may well *question* the *certainty* of that, which I am certain I have been *deceived* by; *supposing* then I should *question* the *truth* of every *thing* which is *conveyed* in an *uncertain* way to my *mind*, I may soon *out-go* even *Pyrrho* himself in real *Scepticism*. Neither can I conceive how *clear* and *distinct* *perception* of any *thing* though not *coming* through the *senses*, doth necessarily *infer* the *existence* of the *thing*; for it only implies a *non-repugnancy* of it to our *natural* *faculties*, and consequently the bare *possibility* of it. For otherwise it were *impossible* for us to have a *clear* *perception* of any *thing* any *longer* than it *exists*, nay than we *know* it to *exist*; for *existence* or *non-existence* is all one to the *understanding*, while it is not *assured* of either. And it is withal *evident*, that *things* *imaginary* may clearly *affect* the *mind* as well as *real*; for I may have as *real* and *distinct* *perception* of a *Phoenix* in my *mind*, as of a *Partridge*; doth it therefore *follow*, that the one is really *existent* as well as the other? and it will be a very hard matter to *assign* a certain *difference* between *imagination* and pure *intellection* in such *things*, which though
not

not actually *existent*, yet imply no *repugnancy* at all to the *faculties* of *mens minds*. It is evident then, that there cannot be so great *certainty* of the *existence* of things as there may be of *Mathematical demonstrations*.

Sett. 3.

And if that *principle* be supposed as the *foundation* of all *Physical certainty* as to the *being* of things, viz. that there is a *God* who being *infinitely good* will not suffer the *minds* of men to be *deceived* in those things which they have a *clear* and *distinct perception* of (without which *supposition* we cannot be *assured* of the *certainty* of any *operations* of the *mind*, because we cannot *know* but we were so made that we might be then most *deceived*, when we thought our *selves* most *sure*) If this *principle*, I say, be supposed as the *foundation* of all *certain knowledge*, then from it I *infer* many things which are very much *advantageous* to our *certainty* in *matters* of *faith*.

1.

That the *foundation* of all *certainty* lies in the *necessary existence* of a *being* *absolutely perfect*. So that unless I *know* that there is a *God*, I cannot be *assured* that I *know* any thing in a *certain manner* ; and if I *know* there is a *God*, I must necessarily *apprehend* him to be *absolutely perfect* ; because the *grounds* of my *knowledge* that there is a *God*, are from those *absolute perfections*, which there are in him ; and if I could suppose him not *absolutely perfect*, I must suppose him not to be *God* ; for that is necessarily implied in his *definition*. Now then if all *certainty* doth suppose the *existence* of a *being* so *absolutely perfect* ; I must, before I can *know* any thing *certainly*, conclude that there is an *infinity* of *knowledge*, *wisdom*, *power* and *goodness* in this *God* ; for those are things which all who *understand* them, will grant to be *perfections* ; and if they be in *God*, they must be *absolute*, i. e. *infinite*. And if they be *infinite*, it necessarily follows that they must *transcend* our *apprehensions* ; so that now we have *gained* this *principle* in order to *faith*, that we must grant something to be *unconceivable*, before we can come *certainly* to *know* any thing. From whence it follows, that those who will not *believe* any thing to be *true*, because it is above their *apprehensions*, must deny the *foundation* of all *certainty*, which (as we have proved) doth suppose something to be *infinite*, or above our *capacity* to *comprehend*.

That

That we have as great certainty of what ever is revealed to us from God, as we can have of the truth of anything which we most clearly understand. For the truth of knowledge depending on this supposition, that there is a God whose goodness will not suffer us to be deceived in the things we clearly understand; there is the same foundation for the act of faith as for that of knowledge, viz. That God will not suffer us to be deceived in matters which himself hath revealed to us. Nay there seems to be far greater on these accounts. First, That there is not so great danger to be deceived in reference to objects of sense, as there is in reference to objects of Divine revelation: because objects of sense make a continual impression upon the Organs of sense; and as to these things we see the whole world agrees in them so far as they are necessary to life, and withal they bear a greater correspondency to the present state of imperfection which the soul is now in: but now matters of Divine revelation are of a more sublime and spiritual nature, which mens minds on that account are more apt to doubt of, than of things obvious to sense; and withal they call the mind so much off from sense, that on these accounts the proneness to doubt is greater, and therefore the foundation of certainty from Gods not suffering us to be deceived must be stronger. Secondly, There is not so great danger in being deceived as to matters of sense or knowledge, as there is in things of Divine revelation. For we see granting sense to be deceived, and that we have no certainty at all in natural things, yet affairs of life are managed still; mens outward welfare depends not on the judgement of sense; the merchant hath never the less gold in his Ship, because his sense deceives him in judging that the earth moves from him, when the Ship moves from it. The Sun doth nevertheless enlighten the world, though our senses be all of Epicurus his mind, that the Sun is no bigger than he seems to be; but now as to matters of Divine revelation, they are things of the most unspeakable weight and importance, which depend upon our believing or disbelieving them. And therefore if the goodness of God be such, as it will not suffer us to be deceived in our judgement of material and sensible beings, how much less in reference to the foundation of our certainty as to things

Divinely

Sect. 4.
2.

Divinely revealed ? We see then what *rational evidence* there is not only *consistent* with, but necessarily *implied* in the *foundation* of *faith*, even as *great* as in any thing which we do most perfectly know ; so that the *in-evidence* which is so much spoken of as an *ingredient* of the *nature* of *faith*, must not be understood of the *foundation* whereon the *act* of *faith* doth stand, but of the *condition* of the *object*, which being a *matter* of *divine revelation*, is a *thing* not *obvious* to our *senses* : In which sense the *Apostle* speaks that *faith* is ἐλπίς ὁρατῶν πραγμάτων, πρᾶγματων ἐλεγχθ' ἢ βλεπομένων, the *firm expectation* of *things hoped for*, and *strong conviction* of *things which are not seen* : In which words, as *Erasmus* well observes, is contained only an high *Encomium* of *faith*, and no *Dialectical* definition of it ; viz. that *faith* soars above *things* of *sense* or *present enjoyment* ; yea, though the *objects* of it be never so *remote* from either, yet where there is *sufficient evidence* of *Divine revelation*, *faith* boggles at no *difficulties*, but is firmly resolved that that *God*, who hath *revealed* these *things*, can and will bring them to *pass* in his own time. There is not then any such *contrariety* between the *foundation* of *faith* and *knowledge*, as the *Schoolmen* have *perswaded* the *world* ; we see both of them *proceed* on the same *foundation* of *certainty* ; all the difference is, *faith* fixeth on the *veracity* of *God* immediately in reference to a *Divine Testimony* ; *knowledge* proceeds upon it, supposing no *Divine revelation*, as to the *things* it doth *discover*.

Sect. 5.
3.

We hence *inferred*, That if the *certainty* of our *knowledge* depends on this *principle*, that *God* will not suffer us to be *deceived*, then we are bound to believe whatever *God* doth *reveal* to us, though we may not be able to comprehend the *nature* of the *things* *revealed*. For as to these *things*, we have the same *ground* of *certainty*, which we have as to any *natural causes*, for as to them, we now suppose from the former *principle*, that setting aside the *existence* of *God*, we could have no *certainty* of them, but that the *formal reason* of our *certainty* is resolved into this, that *Gods goodness* will not suffer the *understanding* to be *deceived* as to these *things* ; the same I say as to *spiritual mysteries* *revealed* by *God* ; the *ground* of our *certainty* lies not in the *evidence* of the *things*,
but

but in the *undoubted veracity* of God who hath revealed them. All that I can imagine possible to be replied to this, is, that *Gods veracity assures us in natural causes that we are not deceived, only where we have a clear and distinct perception of the things, but now in matters above our reason to comprehend, there can be no clear and distinct perception.* To this I answer.

First, it is evident in the foundation of all certainty of knowledge, that there may be a clear and distinct perception of that which we cannot comprehend, viz. of a being absolutely perfect; for if we have not a clear, and distinct perception of God, the foundation of all certainty is destroyed, which is the necessary existence of such a being; and he that shall say he cannot have a clear perception of God without comprehending him, doth contradict himself; for if he be a being infinite, he must be incomprehensible; therefore there may be clear perception, where the object its self is above our capacity. Now whatever foundation there is in nature for such a perception without comprehension; that and much more is there in such things as are revealed by God, though above our apprehension: For the Idea of God upon the soul of man cannot be so strong an evidence of the existence of a being above our apprehension, as the revelation of matters of faith is, that we should believe the beings so revealed, though our understandings lose themselves in striving to reach the natures of them, and the manner of their existence.

Secondly, That which is the only foundation of a scruple in this case, is a principle most unreasonable in it self, that we are to embrace nothing for truth, though divinely revealed, but what our reason is able to comprehend as to the nature of the thing, and the manner of its existence; on which account the doctrine of the Trinity, Incarnation, Satisfaction, and consequently the whole mystery of the Gospel of Christ must be rejected as incredible, and that on this bare pretence, because although many expressions in Scripture seem to import all these things, yet we are bound to interpret them to another sense, because this is incongruous to our reason. But although Christianity be a Religion which comes in the highest way of credibility to the minds of men, although we are not bound to believe any thing but what we have sufficient reason to make it

appear that it is *revealed* by God, yet that any *thing* should be *questioned* whether it be of *divine* revelation, merely because our *reason* is to seek, as to the *full* and *adequate* conception of it, is a most *absurd* and *unreasonable* pretence : And the Assertors of it must run themselves on these unavoidable absurdities.

1. *First*, of believing nothing either in nature or Religion to be true, but what they can give a full and satisfactory account of, as to every mode and circumstance of it. Therefore let such persons first try themselves in all the appearances of nature ; and then we may suppose they will not believe that the Sun shines, till they have by demonstrative arguments proved the undoubted truth of the Ptolemaick or Copernican hypothesis ; that they will never give credit to the flux and reflux of the Sea, till they clearly resolve the doubts which attend the several opinions of it. That there is no such thing as matter in the world, till they can satisfactorily tell us how the parts of it are united ; nor that there are any material beings, till they have resolved all the perplexing difficulties about the several affections of them ; and that themselves have not so much as a rational soul, till they are able to satisfy us of the manner of the union of the soul and body together. And if they can expedite all these, and many more difficulties about the most obvious things (about which it is another thing to frame handsome and consistent hypotheses, than to give a certain account of them) then let them be let loose to the matters of divine revelation ; as to which yet (if they could perform the other) there were no reason for such an undertaking ; for that were

2. *Secondly*, to commensurate the perfections of God with the narrow capacity of the humane intellect ; which is contrary to the natural Idea of God ; and to the manner whereby we take up our conceptions of God ; for the Idea of God doth suppose incomprehensibility to belong to his nature ; and the manner whereby we form our conceptions of God, is by taking away all the imperfections we find in our selves, from the conception we form of a being absolutely perfect, and by adding infinity to all the perfections we find in our own natures. Now this method of proceeding doth necessarily imply a vast

vast distance and disproportion between a finite and infinite understanding. And if the understanding of God be infinite, why may not he discover such things to us, which our shallow apprehensions cannot reach unto? what ground or evidence of reason can we have that an infinite wisdom and understanding, when it undertakes to discover matters of the highest nature and concernment to the world, should be able to deliver nothing but what comes within the compass of our imperfect and narrow intellects? And that it should not be sufficient that the matters revealed do none of them contradict the prime results or common notions of mankind (which none of them do) but that every particular mode and circumstance, as to the manner of existence in God, or the extent of his omnipotent power, must pass the scrutiny of our faculties, before it obtains a Placet for a Divine revelation?

Thirdly, It must follow from this principle, that the pretenders to it must affirm the rules or maxims which they go by in the judgement of things, are the infallible standard of reason: Else they are as far to seek in the judgement of the truth of things as any others are. They must then, to be consistent with their principle, affirm themselves to be the absolute Masters of reason: Now reason consisting of observations made concerning the natures of all beings, (for so it must be considered, as it is a rule of judging, viz. as a System of infallible rules collected from the natures of things) they who pretend to it, must demonstrate these general maxims according to which they judge, to be collected from an universal undoubted history of nature, which lies yet too dark and obscure for any to pretend to the full knowledge of, and would be only a demonstration of the highest arrogance after so many successful endeavours of the most searching wits, in any society of persons to usurp it to themselves, especially if such persons are so far from searching into the depths of nature, that they suffer themselves very fairly to be led by the nose by the most dogmatical of all Philosophers; and that in such principles which the more inquisitive world hath now found to be very short, uncertain and fallacious. And upon severe enquiry we shall find the grand principles which have been taken by the adorers of reason, for almost the standard of it, have been

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some *Theories* which have been taken up meerly from observation of the course of nature by such persons, who scarce owned any hand of providence in the world. Now it cannot otherwise be conceived but that these *Theories* or principles formed from such a narrow inspection into the natures of things, must make strange work when we come to apply those things to them, which were never looked at in the forming of them: Whence came those two received principles that nothing can be produced out of nothing; that there is no possible return from a privation to a habit, but from those Philosophers who believed there was nothing but matter in the world; or if they did assert the existence of a God, yet supposed him unconcerned in the Government of the world? Whence come our Masters of reason to tell us that the soul cannot subsist after death without the body? from what Philosophy was this derived? certainly from that which was very loth to acknowledge the immortality of the soul of man: And any one who strictly observes the close coherence of the principles of the Peripatetick Philosophy will find very little room left for an eternal being to interpose it self in the world; and therefore some have shrewdly observed that Aristotle speaks more favourably of the being of God in his *Exotericks*, than in his *Acromaticks*, which all that know the reason of the names, will guess at the reason of. I demand then, must the received principles of Philosophy, and those short imperfect Theories, which were formed more from tradition than experience, by the ancient Greeks, be taken for the standard of reason or no? If they must, we may soon forsake not only the sublimer mysteries of the Trinity, Divinity of Christ, Resurrection, &c. but we shall soon shake hands with Creation, Providence, if not immortality of souls, and the Being of God himself. If these things be disowned as the standard of reason, let us know what will be substituted in the room of them? and what Laws our faith must be tried by? Are they only Mathematical demonstrations, or the undoubted common notions of humane nature, which whosoever understands assents to them? let any of the forementioned mysteries be made appear to contradict these, and we will readily yield up our selves captives to reason: But in the

the mean time let no jejune unproved hypotheses in Philosophy, be set as Judges over matters of faith, whose only warrant for that office must be *Stat pro ratione voluntas*. Let the principles we proceed by, be first manifested to be collected from a most certain and universal inspection into the nature of all beings, let the manner of process be shewed how they were collected (lest they labour with the common fault of the Chymists, of establishing hypostatical principles from the experiments of some particular bodies, which others do as evidently refute) and lastly, let it be made appear that these principles, thus collected, will serve indifferently for all beings, spiritual as well as material, infinite as well as finite, and when this Task is exactly performed, we will make room for Reason to sit upon the Bench, and bring the Scripture as the Prisoner to its Bar.

Fourthly, According to this principle, what certainty can we have at all of anything we are to believe? who hath fixed the bounds of that which men call reason? how shall we know that thus far it will come, and no further? If no banks be raised against it to keep it in its due chanel, we may have cause to fear it may in time overthrow not only the Trinity, Incarnation, Resurrection of the dead, but all other articles of the Creed too. What prescription can be pleaded by one sort of men for reason more than by another? One will not believe this article of his faith, because against his reason; and why not another reject another article on the same pretence? for whatever the ground of unbelief be, if it be but baptized by the name of reason, it must by this principle pass uncontrouled; if a fullen Philosopher shall tell us, that the notion of an immaterial substance contradicts his reason as much as the Trinity doth theirs, and that the Universe is nothing else but a Systeme of bodies, by what Artifice will our Masters of reason purge away all that black choler that so clouds his mind, that he cannot see the notion of a spirit through it? And such a one will make a hard shift, but he will reconcile his opinion with Scripture too; and therefore why should he be bound up to mens explications of Scripture, when there is no necessity, that he can see, of understanding it in any other way than his own? If another should come
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and tells us, that we must be all *Anthropomorphites*, and that otherwise the *Scripture* were not *intelligible*; shall not this *man* put in for reason too? Nay *lastly*, if another shall come and speak out, and tell us *Religion* is but a *device* of *subtle men*, that all *things* come to *pass* through *chance*, that the *world* was made by a *fortuitous concourse* of *Atoms*, and that all are *fools* which are not *Atheists*, and that it is impossible to *apprehend* the *Being* of a *God*, and therefore by the same *reason* that they reject some *mysteries* of *Religion*, he rejects the *foundation* of all; because an *infinite being* is *incomprehensible*: whither now hath our *Reason* carried us? while we pretend to *reject* any thing as *divinely revealed*, merely on that *account*, that it is *above our reason*? But it may be replied, *On what account* then do we reject the *Doctrine* of *Transubstantiation*, and the *ubiquity* of the *body* of *Christ*, as *repugnant to reason*, if we do not make *reason* judge in *matters of faith*? I answer, 1. We reject these *opinions* not only as *repugnant to reason*, but as *insufficiently proved* from *Scripture*, whereas we here suppose (it not being our present business to prove it) that the several *doctrines* of the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Resurrection* of *bodies*, &c. are only *rejected* on that *account*, that though *Scripture* seems to speak *fair* for them, yet it is otherwise to be *interpreted*, because *supposed* to be *repugnant to reason*. 2. Those *doctrines* before mentioned are *eminently serviceable* to *promote* the *great end* of the *Gospel*, and are *inlaid* in the very *foundation* of it, as that of the *Trinity*, and *Divinity* of *Christ*; but these we now mention are no ways *conducibile* to that *end*; but seem to *thwart* and *overthrow* it, and *Transubstantiation* establisheth a way of *worship* contrary to the *Gospel*. 3. All the *foundation* of *Transubstantiation* is laid upon *ambiguous places* of *Scripture*, which must of *necessity* have some *Tropes* and *Figures* in them; but the *doctrine* of the *Trinity* is not only contained in *plain Scripture*, but is *evidenced* by *visible appearance*, as particularly at the *baptism* of our *Saviour*. 4. There is far greater ground why we should reject *Transubstantiation* and *ubiquity*, as *inconsistent* with *reason*, than that they should the *Trinity*, on this *account*, because the *grounds* of *reason* on which we reject those

those opinions, are fetched from those essential and inseparable properties of bodies, which are inconsistent with those opinions; now these are things within the reach of our understandings (in which case God himself sometimes appeals to reason) but it is quite another case, when we search into the incomprehensible nature of God, and pronounce with confidence that such things cannot be in God, because we cannot comprehend them; which gives a sufficient answer to this objection. The substance then of this discourse is, that whatever doctrine is sufficiently manifested to be of divine revelation, is to be embraced and believed as undoubtedly true, though our reason cannot reach to the full apprehension of all the Modes and circumstances of it. So that as to these sublime mysteries our faith stands upon this twofold bottom. First, *That the being, understanding, and power of God doth infinitely transcend ours, and therefore he may reveal to us matters above our reach and capacity.* Secondly, *That whatever God doth reveal is undoubtedly true, though we may not fully understand it;* for this is a most undoubted principle, that God cannot and will not deceive any in those things which he reveals to men. Thus our first supposition is cleared, that it is not repugnant to reason, that a doctrine may be true, which depends not on the evidence of the thing it self.

The second is, *That in matters whose truth depends not on the evidence of the things themselves, infallible testimony is the fullest demonstration of them.* For these things, not being of Mathematical evidence, there must be some other way found out for demonstrating the truth of them. And in all those things whose truth depends on Testimony, the more creditable the Testimony is, the higher evidence is given to them; but that testimony which may deceive, cannot give so pregnant an evidence as that which cannot; for then all imaginable objections are taken off. This is so clear, that it needs no further proof; and therefore the third follows.

That there are certain ways whereby to know that a Testimony delivered is infallible; and that is fully proved by these two Arguments. 1. That it is the duty of all those to whom

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whom it is propounded to believe it ; now how could that be a duty in them to believe, which they had no ways to know whether it were a Testimony to be believed, or no? 2. Because God will condemn the world for unbelief : In which the Justice of Gods proceedings doth necessarily suppose that there were sufficient arguments to induce them to believe, which could not be, unless there were some certain way supposed whereby a Testimony may be known to be infallible. These three things now being supposed, viz. that a doctrine may be true which depends not on evidence of reason, that the greatest demonstration of the truth of such a doctrine, is its being delivered by infallible Testimony ; and that there are certain ways whereby a Testimony may be known to be infallible, Our first principle is fully confirmed, which was, that where the truth of a doctrine depends not on evidence of reason, but on the authority of him that reveals it, the only way to prove the doctrine to be true, is to prove the Testimony of him that reveals it to be infallible.

Sett. 8.

Hyp. 2.

The next principle or Hypothesis which I lay down, is, That there can be no greater evidence that a Testimony is infallible, than that it is the Testimony of God himself. The truth of this depends upon a common notion of humane nature, which is the veracity of God in whatever way he discovers himself to men ; and therefore the ultimate resolution of our faith, as to its formal object, must be alone in to the veracity of God revealing things unto us ; for the principium certitudinis, or foundation of all certain assent can be fetched no higher, neither will it stand any lower than the infallible verity of God himself ; and the principium patefactionis ; or the ground of discovery of spiritual truth to our minds must be resolved into Divine Testimony, or revelation. These two then not taken asunder, but jointly, God, who cannot lye, hath revealed these things, is the only certain foundation for a divine faith to rest it self upon. But now the particular exercise of a Divine faith lies in a firm assent to such a particular thing as Divinely revealed, and herein lies not so much the Testimony, as the peculiar energy of the Spirit of God in inclining the soul to believe peculiar objects of faith, as of Divine revelation. But the
general

general ground of faith, which they call the *formal object*, or the *ratio propter quam credimus* is the general infallibility of a *Divine Testimony*. For in a matter concerning *divine revelation*, there are two great questions to be resolved : The first is, *Why I believe a Divine Testimony with a firm assent* ? The answer to that is, *Because I am assured, that whatever God speaks is true* : the other is, *upon what grounds do I believe this to be a Divine Testimony* ? The resolution of which, as far as I can understand, must be fetched from those *rational evidences* whereby a *Divine Testimony* must be distinguished from one meerly humane and fallible. For the *Spirit of God* in its workings upon the mind, doth not carry it on by a brutish impulse, but draws it by a spiritual discovery of such strong and persuasive grounds to assent to what is revealed, that the mind doth readily give a firm assent to that which it sees such convincing reason to believe. Now the strongest reason to believe, is the manifestation of a *divine Testimony* ; which the *Spirit of God* so clearly discovers to a true believer, that he not only firmly assents to the general foundation of faith, the veracity of God, but to the particular object propounded, as a matter of *Divine Revelation*. But this latter question is not here the matter of our discourse ; our proposition only concerns the general foundation of faith ; which appears to be so rational and evident, as no principle in nature can be more. For if the *Testimony* on which I am to rely be only God's, and I be assured from natural reason, that his *Testimony* can be no other than infallible, wherein doth the certainty of the foundation of faith fall short of that in any *Mathematical demonstration* ? Upon which account a *Divine Testimony* hath been regarded with so much veneration among all who have owned a Deity, although they have been unacquainted with any certain way of *Divine revelation*. And the reason why any rejected such a *Testimony* among the *Heathens*, was either because they believed not a Deity, or else that the particular *Testimonies* produced were meer frauds and impostures, and therefore no *Divine Testimony* as it was given out to be. But the principle still remained indisputable, that on supposition the *Testimony* were what it pretended to be, there was the great-

In fragment. Ci-
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test reason to believe it, although it came not in such a way of probation, as their sciences proceeded in. From which principle arose that speech of Tully which he hath translated out of Plato's *Timæus*, *Ac difficillimum factu à Diis ortis fidem non habere, quanquam nec argumentis nec rationibus certis eorum oratio confirmetur.* By which we see what a presumption there was of Truth, where there was any evidence of a Divine Testimony. And no doubt upon the advantage of this principle it was the Devil gained so great credit to his oracles; for therein he did the most imitate Divine revelation. From hence then we see what a firm bottom faith in the general stands upon, which is nothing short of an *Infallible Divine Testimony*: other things may conduce by way of subserviency for the discovery of this; but nothing else can be a sure foundation for a Divine faith, but what is a Testimony of God himself.

Señ. 9.
Hyp. 3.

A Testimony may be known to be Divine and infallible, though God himself do not speak in an immediate way. By being known, I do not mean the firm persuasion of a mind enlightened by the Spirit of God, but that there are sufficient evidences *ex parte rei* to convince men of it, which are not wilfully blind and obstinate, i. e. that the ground of unbelief in any cannot be imputed to the defect of sufficient motives to faith, but to their own perverseness and prejudice in not discerning them. Now that God may reveal and declare his mind to the world, not in an immediate way, but by some instruments he may make use of to that end, is not only evident from the great suitableness of such a way to the conditions of the persons he speaks to, but from the general persuasion of the world concerning the possibility of Inspiration. The Jews are so far from denying this, that it is the very foundation of their religion as well as ours, God discovering the most of his will to them by the Prophets or by persons Divinely inspired. And the general consent of all other Nations, that there is such a principle as Divination in the world, doth make it evident, that it carries no repugnancy at all to natural light, supposing that there is a God, that he should reveal his mind by some particular persons unto the world. For which purpose the Testimony of Tully in the
entrance

entrance of his books *de Divinatione*, is very considerable. *Vetus opinio est jam usque ab Heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque & populi Romani & omnium gentium firmata consensu, versari quendam inter homines divinationem, quam Græci μαντινὴν appellant, i. e. præsentionem & scientiam rerum futurarum;* and soon after adds, *gentem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem atque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, & à quibusdam intelligi, prædicique posse censeat.* He makes it appear to be an universal sentiment of all Nations in the world, and instanceth particularly in the *Assyrians, Egyptians, Cilicians, Pisidians, Pamphilians, Grecians, Romans, Etrurians*, and others. It is true indeed he after mentions some Philosophers who denyed it; but they were most part the followers of *Epicurus*, who denyed any providence, and therefore might well take away divination; but if *Xenophanes Colophonius* had any followers who asserted the one, and denyed the other (as *Tully* seems to intimate that he was alone in that persuasion) yet we may probably suppose the reason of their rejecting it might be the impostures which went under the name of *Divination* among them; which are excellently discovered by that Prince of Roman Philosophers as well as Orators, in his second book of *Divination*; but it is apparent by the same Author, that the generality of Philosophers consented with the people in this persuasion, as the followers of those three great Sects of *Socrates, Pythagoras*, and *Aristotle* were all approvers of it; but of all persons the *Stoicks* were the most zealous contenders for it, especially *Chrysippus, Diogenes Babylonius, Antipater*, and *Possidonius*: some indeed rejected some ways of *Divination*, yet embraced others, as *Dicaarchus* and *Cratippus*, who rejected all but dreams and ecstasies; but in the general we find these two principles went together among them, the existence of a Deity, and the certainty of *Divination*; so that from *Divination* they proved a Deity, and from a Deity *Divination*. *Si sunt genera divinandi vera, esse Deos; vicissimque si Dii sint, esse qui divinent*, as *Quintus Cicero* there speaks: and at last thus triumphs in the multitude of his witnesses, *An dum bestia loquantur expectamus, hominum consentiente auctoritate contenti non sumus?* It may not be amiss to produce the chief

L. 1. de Div.

argument on which the Stoicks insisted to prove the necessity of Divination, supposing the existence of a Deity. If there be Gods, say they, and they do not reveal to men things to come, it either is because they do not love them, or because they do not know themselves what shall come to pass, or they think it is of no concernment to men to know future things, or that it doth not become their Majesty to reveal them, or that they cannot reveal them to men if they would; but neither is it true that they do not love men; for the Gods are of a bountiful nature and friends to mankind; neither can they be ignorant of future things, because they are appointed and decreed by them, neither is it of no concernment to men to know future things; for that makes them more cautious if they know them; neither is it repugnant to their Majesty to reveal them; for nothing is more noble than bounty and doing good; and they must needs know these things; therefore they may make them known to others; and if they do make them known, there must be some way whereby to know that they do so; or else they signify them to no purpose. If now instead of the knowledge of future contingencies, and the multitude of their Gods, they had insisted on the discovery and revelation by the true God of those ways which may lead men to eternal happiness, that argument had been strong and convincing, which as it stands is Sophistical and fallacious. So that it is very plain, that not only a possibility of Divination was acknowledged by those who wanted Divine revelation, but that this divination did not arise from meer natural causes, but from an *afflatus Divinus*, and a *concitatio quædam animi*, as they there speak, which imports nothing short of Divine inspiration. Nay the opinion of this was so common among them, that they thought any extraordinary persons had something of Divine Enthusiasm in them, as Tully elsewhere tells us, *Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu Divino unquam fuit*. Although then these Heathens were greatly mistaken as to those things they took for a Divine *afflatus* and Divination, yet we cannot conceive so general a sense should be imprinted on the minds of men of such a thing as that was, were it not a thing highly consonant to principles of reason, that God should communicate his mind to the world by the inspiration of some persons. And therefore I conceive that Cicero and his brother

ther *Quintus*, who manage that excellent dispute of Divination between them, have divided the truth between them too. For on the one side *Quintus* evidently proves the possibility of the thing, the consequence of it upon the acknowledgement of a Deity, and the general consent of mankind in the owning of it; and on the other side *Tully* himself excellently layes open the vanity, folly, and uncertainty, not only of the common ways of Divination, but of the Oracles which were in such great esteem among the *Heathens*. And although *Tully* doth so sharply and sarcastically answer the argument from the common consent of men; *quasi vero quidquam sit tam valde, quam nihil sapere, vulgare*; as though nothing men did more generally agree in, than in being fools; yet as it is evident that the ground of that scoff was from the several manners of Divination then in use, so it cannot be thought to be a general impeachment of humane nature in a thing so consequent upon the being of a God, which as himself elsewhere proves, is as clear from reason as from that *Testimonium gentium in hac una re non dissidentium*, as the Christian *Cicero*, *Lactantius* speaks, the consent of Nations, which scarce agree in any thing else, but that there is a God. That which we now infer from hence is, that God may make known his mind in a way infallible, though not immediate; for in case of Inspiration of meer men, it is not they so much which speak, as God by them; and in case that God himself should speak through the vail of humane nature, the Testimony must needs be infallible, though the appearance of the Divinity be not visible.

De fals. relig.
cap. 2.

Those evidences whereby a Divine Testimony may be known must be such as may not leave mens minds in suspense, but are of their own nature convincing proofs of it. For although as to the event some may doubt, and others disbelieve the Testimony so proved, yet it is sufficient for our purpose, that in the nature of the things (supposing them to be such as we speak of) they are sufficient for the eviction that the Testimony attested by them is divine and infallible. I know it is a great dispute among many, whether those things which are usually called the common motives of faith, do of their own nature only induce a probable perswasion of the truth of the

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Hyp. 4.

doctrine

doctrine as probable which they are joyned with, or else are they sufficient for the producing a firm assent to the doctrine as True? I grant they are not demonstrative so as to enforce assent; for we see the contrary by the experience of all ages; but that they are not sufficient foundation for an unprejudiced mind to establish a firm assent upon, is a thing not easie to be granted; chiefly upon this account, that an obligation to believe doth lie upon every one to whom these evidences of a Divine Testimony are sufficiently discovered. And otherwise of all sins the sin of unbelief as to God revealing his mind, were the most excuseable and pardonable sin; nay, it would be little less than a part of prudence; because what can it be accounted but temerity and imprudence in any to believe a doctrine as true only upon probable inducements? and what can it be but wisdom to withhold assent upon a meer verisimilitude? considering what the *Lyrick Poet* hath long since truly told us,

Pindar. Od. I.

ὃ πᾶς π' ὃ βροτῶν φρένα
 ἰστέρι τ' ἀληθείᾳ λόγον
 διδασκαλῶσι ψεύδει ποικίλοις
 ἔξαπατῶντι μῦθοι.

That a falshood may frequently seem truer to common understandings than truth it self: and as *Meander* speaks, τὸ πειστικὸν ἰσχυρὸν τ' ἀληθείας ἔχει ἐνίοτε μείζω, ὃ πειστικώτερον ὄχλῳ, that a meer verisimilitude may have more force on vulgar minds than truth hath. If therefore there be no evidences given sufficient to carry the minds of men beyond meer probability, what sin can it be in those to disbelieve who cannot be obliged to believe as true what is only discovered as probable? I cannot therefore see how an obligation to believe a Divine Testimony is consistent with their opinion, who make the utmost which any outward evidences can extend to, to be only the bare credibility of the doctrine attested by them. I can very well satisfy my self with the ground and reason why the more subtle wits of the Church of Rome do assert this; for if nothing else can be produced by all motives of faith but only a probable perswasion of the truth of Christian doctrine,

doctrine, then here comes in the fairest pretence for the *Infallibility* of their *Church*; for otherwise they tell us we can have no *foundation* for a *Divine faith*; for how can that be a *foundation* for *Divine faith*, which can reach no higher than a *moral inducement*, and beget only a *probable perswasion* of the *credibility* of the *doctrine of Christ*? But on what account those who disown the *Infallibility* of the *Church of Rome* in the proposal of matters of faith, should yet consent with those of it in an *hypothesis* taken up in *probability*, meerly out of *subserviency* to that most advantageous piece of the *mystery of iniquity*, is not easie to resolve. Unless the *over-fondness* of some upon the *doctrine* of the *Schools*, more than of the *Gospel*, hath been the occasion of it. For how agreeable can that opinion be to the *Gospel* which so evidently puts the most *defensive weapons* into the hands of *unbelief*? For doubtless in the judgement of any *rational person*, a meer *probable perswasion* of the *credibility* of the *doctrine of Christ*, where an *assent* to it as *true* is required, can never be looked on as an *act of faith*; for if my *assent* to the *truth* of the *thing* be according to the *strength* of the *arguments* inducing me to *believe*, and these arguments do only prove a *probability* of *Divine Testimony*, my *assent* can be no stronger than to a *thing* meerly *probable*; which is, that it *maybe* or *not be true*; which is not properly *assent*, but a *suspending* our judgements till some *convincing arguments* be produced on either side. And therefore according to this opinion those who saw all the *miracles* which *Christ* did, could not be bound to *believe* in *Christ*, but only to have a *favourable opinion* of his *person* and *doctrine*, as a *thing* which though not evidenced to be true by what he did, yet it was very *piously credible*; but they must have a care withal of venturing their belief too far, only on such *moral inducements* as *miracles* were, for fear they should go farther than the force of the arguments would carry them. Had not this opinion now, think we, been a very *probable way* to have converted the world upon the *Preaching* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*; when *Christ* saith, though ye believe not me, believe the works, Joh. 10. 38. that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him; Nay, saith this opinion, that is more than we are bound to.

Heb. 2. 3, 4.

Señ. I I.

to do, though we see thy works we are not bound to believe thy Testimony to be Divine and certainly true; but we will do all we are bound to do; we will entertain a favourable opinion of thy person and doctrine, and wait for somewhat else, but we do not well know what, to persuade us to believe. When the Apostles Preach the danger of unbelief, because the doctrine of the Gospel was confirmed by signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost; what a fair answer doth this opinion put into the mouths of Infidels, that notwithstanding all these signs and wonders, they were never bound to believe the Gospel as a certain Truth, and therefore they hope the danger is not so great in neglecting the salvation promised by the Gospel.

I cannot conceive that men otherwise learned and sober, should with so much confidence assert that the rational evidences of a Divine Testimony are insufficient to prove a doctrine true, unless it be from hence, that they find that notwithstanding the strongest evidences many persons continue in unbelief. For say they, if these arguments were scientific and demonstrative, (as they speak) of the truth of the doctrine attested by them, then all persons to whom they are propounded, must certainly believe. But this is very easily answered; for we speak not of internal, but outward evidence; not of that in the subject, but of the object, or more fully of the reason of the thing, and not the event in us; for doubtless there may be undoubted truth and evidence in many things which some persons either cannot or will not understand. If Epicurus should contend still that the Sun and stars are no bigger than they seem to be, will it hence follow that there can be no rational demonstration of the contrary? Nay if the way of demonstration be offered him, and Telescopes put into his hands, yet if he be resolved to maintain his credit, and therefore his opinion, and will not use the Telescopes, or suspect still they are intended only to deceive his sight, what possible way will there be of convincing such a person, though the thing be in it self demonstrable? Now if the strength of prejudice or maintaining of credit can prevail so much in matters of Mathematical evidence to withhold assent, what power may we think a corrupt interest may have upon

upon the *understanding*, as to the *arguments* which tend to prove the *truth* of that *doctrine*, which is so *repugnant* to that *carnal interest* which the *heart* is already devoted to ! Our *bleſſed Saviour* hath himſelf given us ſo full an *account* of the *original* and *cauſes* of *unbelief* in the *perſons* he converſed with, that that may *yield* us a ſufficient *answer* to this *objection*. He tells us the *ground* of it was not want of *light*, nay, there was *light* ſufficient to convince any, but that thoſe to whom the *light* came, *loved darkneſs* rather than it, *becauſe their deeds were evil*. That they could not believe while they received honour one of another, and ſought not the honour which was of God only, *i. e.* That they were ſo *greedy* of applauſe from each other, that they would not *impartially ſearch* into the *truth* of that *doctrine*, which did touch their *ſores* ſo to the quick, that they had rather have them *feſter* upon them, than go to the trouble of ſo *ſharp* a cure. That the *reaſon* ſo few followed him was be- cauſe the *way* was *narrow* and the *gate ſtrait* which men muſt go in at ; and therefore no wonder ſo few of the *rich* and *proud Pharifees* could get in at it ; they were partly ſo *ſwell'd* with a high *opinion* of themſelves, and partly ſo *loaden* with their *riches*, that they thought it was to no *purpoſe* for them to *think of going* in at ſo *ſtrait* a gate, while they were reſolved to *part* with *neither*.

John 3. 19.

John 5. 44.

Matth. 7. 14.

That the final *ground* of the *rejection* of any, was not want of *evidence* to bring them to *believe*, nor want of *readineſs* in *Chriſt* to receive them, if they did, but it was a *peeviſh*, *wilful*, *obſtinate*, *malicious ſpirit*, that they would not come to *Chriſt*, nor believe his *Doctrinè* (for thoſe import the ſame) but when the moſt *convincing miracles* were uſed, they would rather *attribute* them to the *Prince of Devils*, than to the *power of God*. And though our *Saviour* preſently by *rational* and *demonſtrative arguments* did prove the *contrary* to their *faces* ; yet we ſee thereby it was a *reſolution* not to be *convinced*, or *yield* to the *Truth*, which was the *cauſe* why they did not believe. Now from this *very inſtance* of our *Saviours* proceedings with the *Phariſees* by *rational arguments*, I demand, whether theſe *arguments* of our *Saviour* were ſufficient *foundations* for a *divine aſſent*

John 5. 40.

Matth. 11. 24.

to that truth that our Saviour did not his miracles by any Diabolical but by Divine power or no? If they were, then it is evident that rational evidence may be a foundation for Divine faith, or that some motives to believe may be so strong, as to be sufficient evidence of the truth and certainty of the Doctrine: If these arguments were not sufficient proofs of what our Saviour spake, then welfare the Pharisees; it seems they said nothing but what might be thus far justified, that the contrary to it could not be demonstrated. And if the evidence of our Saviours miracles were so great, as some suppose, that the Pharisees could not but be convinced that they were divine; but out of their malice and envy they uttered this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, to keep the people from following Christ; then we hence infer two things: First, How strong an evidence there was in the miracles of Christ, when it convinced his most resolute enemies that they were divine. Secondly, What power a corrupt will may have over a convinced understanding: For although the will may not hinder conviction, yet it may soon stifle it, by suggesting those things to the mind which may divert it from those convictions of Truth; and seek to find out any ways to disgrace it. It would be no difficult task to discover in all those instances wherein the unbelief of men is discovered in the New Testament, that the persons guilty of it did not proceed like rational men, or such as desired Truth, but were wholly carried away through passion, ignorance, prejudice, disaffection, or some other cause of that nature, which may give us a sufficient account why those persons did not believe, although there might be clear and undoubted evidence to persuade them to it. But although I assert that these rational evidences are sufficient arguments of the truth of the doctrine they come to manifest, yet I would not be so understood, that I thereby resolve all Religion into a meer act of reason and knowledge, and that no more power is required in the understanding to believe the Gospel, than to believe a Mathematical demonstration: which is another objection some lay in the way of this opinion; but it is not difficult getting over it. For the sufficiency which I attribute to rational evidence, is not absolute and simple, but in suo genere, as an ob-

jective

tive evidence. Notwithstanding this, the whole work of the Spirit of God in its peculiar energy and way of operation upon the soul, is left entire to it self: But then when the spirit works as to the planting of a truly divine faith, I do not think that it only persuades the soul of the Truth of a Divine Testimony, but withal represents the Truths revealed by that Testimony, with all that excellency and suitableness that there is in them, that by the most agreeable, yet effectual influence of the spirit upon the soul, it cheerfully embraceth that Truth which is revealed, and cordially yields up it self in obedience to it. This is the Divine faith which the Scripture acquaints us with, and not such a one as meerly believes the truth of a Divine Testimony; and as to the production of this faith, I acknowledge meer rational evidence to be insufficient, because they proceed in two very different ways; the one is to satisfy mens minds in the truth of the doctrine, the other is to bring them effectually to adhere unto it. The asserting of the one therefore doth no more tend to destroy the other, than the saying that a Telescope will help us to discover very much of the heavenly bodies, doth imply that a blind man may see them, if he makes but use of them. Although therefore the natural man cannot savingly apprehend the things of God, yet there may be so much rational evidence going along with Divine revelation, that supposing reason to be pure, and not corrupted and steeped in sense as now it is, it would discover spiritual evidence to be the most real and convincing evidence. Thus far we have proved, that where there is any infallible Testimony, there is sufficient rational evidence going along with it, to make it appear that it is from God.

CHAP. IX.

The rational evidence of the Truth of Christian Religion from Miracles.

The possibility of miracles appears from God and providence; the evidence of a Divine Testimony by them. God alone can really alter the course of nature. The Devils power of working miracles considered. Of Simon Magus, Apollonius. The cures in the Temple of Æsculapius at Rome, &c. God never works miracles, but for some particular end. The particular reasons of the miracles of Christ. The repealing the Law of Moses, which had been settled by miracles. Why Christ checked the Pharisees for demanding a sign, when himself appeals to his miracles. The power of Christs miracles on many who did not thoroughly believe. Christs miracles made it evident that he was the Messias, because the predictions were fulfilled in him. Why John Baptist wrought no miracles. Christs miracles necessary for the overthrow of the Devils Kingdom. Of the Demoniacks and Lunaticks in the Gospel, and in the Primitive Church. The power of the name of Christ over them largely proved by several Testimonies. The evidence thence of a Divine power in Christ. Of counterfeit dispossessions. Of miracles wrought among Infidels. Of the future state of the Church. The necessity of the miracles of Christ, as to the propagation of Christian Religion : that proved from the condition of the publishers, and the success of the Doctrine. The Apostles knew the hazard of their employment, before they entered on it. The boldness and resolution of the Apostles notwithstanding this, compared with heathen Philosophers. No motive could carry the Apostles through their employment, but the truth of their Doctrine, not seeking the honour, profit or pleasure of the world. The Apostles evidence of the truth of their doctrine lay in being eye-witnesses of our Saviours miracles and resurrection. That attested by themselves ; their sufficiency thence for preaching the Gospel. Of the nature of the doctrine of the Gospel ; contrariety of

it to natural inclinations. Strange success of it, notwithstanding it came not with humane power : No Christian Emperor, till the Gospel universally preached. The weakness and simplicity of the instruments which preached the Gospel. From all which the great evidence of the power of miracles is proved.

OF all rational evidences which tend to confirm the truth of a Divine Testimony, there can be none greater than a power of working miracles for confirmation that the Testimony which is revealed is infallible. The possibility of a power of miracles cannot be questioned by any who assert a Deity and a Providence; for by the same power that things were either at first produced, or are still conserved (which is equivalent to the other) the course of nature may be altered, and things caused which are beyond the power of inferior causes : For though that be an immutable Law of nature as to Physical beings, that every thing remains in the course and order wherein it was set at the Creation; yet that only holds till the same power which set it in that order shall otherwise dispose of it. Granting then the possibility of miracles, the subject of this Hypothesis is, that a power of miracles is the clearest evidence of a Divine Testimony, which will appear from these following considerations.

Seet. 1.

Hyp. 5.

God alone can really alter the course of nature. I speak not of such things which are apt only to raise admiration in us because of our unacquaintedness with the causes of them, or manner of their production, which are thence called wonders, much less of meer juggles and impostures, whereby the eyes of men are deceived; but I speak of such things as are in themselves either contrary to, or above the course of nature, i. e. that order which is established in the universe. The Devil no question may, and doth often deceive the world, and may by the subtilty and agility of his nature, perform such things as may amuse the minds of men, and sometimes put them to it, to find a difference between them and real miracles, if they only make their senses Judges of them. And such kind of wonders, though they are but sparingly done, and with a kind of secrecy (as though they

1.

were consulting with *Cataline* about the *burning Rome*) yet the *Devil* would have *some* (especially when *Ignorance* and *Superstition* are *Ascendants*) to keep up his *interest* in the world. Or else when he is like to be *dispossessed* and thrown out of all, he then *tryes* his *utmost* to keep as many to him as may be; thus when the *Spirit of God* appeared in the *miracles* of our *Saviour* and his *Apostles* and the *Primitive Church*, he then conjured up all the *infernal powers* to do something *parallel*, to keep possession of his *Idolatrous Temples*, as long as he could. Thus we find *Simon Magus* dogging the *Apostles* (as it were) at the *heels*, that by his *Magick* he might stagger the *faith* of people concerning the *miracles* wrought by the *Apostles*: after him *Apollo-nius* appeared upon the *Stage*; but his *wonders* are such pitiful things, compared with those wrought by *Christ* or his *Apostles*, that it could be *nothing* but *malice* in *Hierocles* to mention him in *competition* with *Christ*. But those things which seem a great deal more *considerable* than either of these, were the cure of a *blind man* by *Vespasian* in *Egypt*, mentioned by *Tacitus* and *Suetonius*, wherein there was a palpable imitation of our *Saviours* curing the *blind man* in the *Gospel*; for the man told *Vespasian*, *restitutum oculos si inspuiisset*, that he should receive his sight by his spittle; so *Spartianus* tells us of a woman that was cured of her blindness by kissing the knees of the *Emperour Adrian*; and *Boethornius* hath produced an old *Table* in the *Temple of Esculapius* at *Rome* of several diseased persons that were cured there. A *blind man* in the time of *Antoninus* was cured by this *Oracle*; he must come to the *Altar*, and kneel there; from the right side he must turn to the left, and put five fingers upon the *Altar*, and then lift up his hands and touch his eyes, and so was cured. Another called *Lucius* cured of the pain of his side, by mixing the ashes of the altar with the wine, and applying it to his side; another cured of spitting blood by the kernel of a pine apple, and honey used three dayes; a fourth cured of blindness by the blood of a white Cock and honey, used three dayes upon his eyes. These are the most *considerable* of all the pretended *miracles* done about that time, when the noise of the *Christian miracles* were spread so far, and done so frequently,

Sueton. Vesp.
c. 7.

Quest. Rom.
q. 7.

quently, that they challenged the Heathens again and again to bring forth any person possessed with a Devil, if he did not confess to them that he was a Devil, though he made the Heathens believe that he was a God, they were contented to leave their blood in the place.

For thus Tertullian speaks in his *Apology* to them. *Eda. Apol. c. 23.*
tur hic aliquis sub tribunalibus vestris, quem demone agi constet: jussus a quolibet Christiano loqui spiritus ille, tam se Dæmonem confitebitur de vero, quam alibi Deum de falso: aque producatnr aliquis ex iis qui de Deo pati existimantur, qui aris inhalantes numen de nidore concipiunt, qui ructando curantur, qui anhelando profantur. Ista ipsa Virgo cœlestis pluviarum pollicitatrix, iste ipse Æsculapius Medicinarum demonstrator, alias de moriuris scordii & denarii & Asclepiadoti subministrator, nisi se Dæmones confessi fuerint, Christiano mentiri non audentes, ibidem illius Christiani procacissimi sanguinem fundite. Quid isto opere manifestius, quid hac probatione fidelius? simplicitas veritatis in medio est; virtus illi sua assistit, nihil suspicari licebit, magia aut aliqua fallacia fieri. Dictis non stetis, si oculi vestri & aures permiserint vobis. In these very daring words, we see how the Christians appealed to their senses, even with the hazard of their own lives, that they would make even Æsculapius himself confess what he was, and by whole power all the cures were wrought upon the dreamers in his Temples. And for the manner of the Devils cures, the same Author explains it thus, *Lædunt primo, dehinc remedia præcipiunt ad miraculum nova, sive contraria, post quæ desinunt ledere & curasse creduntur. Apol. c. 22.* They first possess the bodies themselves (as *Demoniacks* were common in those times) and affect it with various distempers, afterwards upon using the strange remedies prescribed by Æsculapius, they forsake their station, and the person is cured. And for the cures performed by the Emperours, those who consider what various artifices were about that time used to procure an opinion of Divinity in the Emperours, will not much wonder that such reports should be spread of them, or that any persons should feign these distempers to give themselves out to be cured by them. But granting somewhat wonderful in these, what are they,
compared

compared with those done by Christians? and who ever would lay down his life to attest any of them? So that though the Devil by his subtilty may easily impose upon Spectators eyes, yet it was impossible for him by any power of his own to alter the course of nature or produce any real miracle. For every true miracle is a production of something out of nothing (which cannot be done by less than an omnipotent arm) and that either in the thing it self, or the manner of producing it. In the thing it self when it is of that nature that it cannot be produced by any second causes, as the raising of the dead; in the manner of doing it, when though the thing lies within the possibility of second causes, yet it is performed without the help of any of them, as in the cure of diseases without any use of means, by a word speaking, the touch of a garment, &c. Now that all those miracles which were wrought in confirmation of the Christian doctrine were such true and proper miracles, will be discovered afterwards.

- Scēt. 2. God never alters the course of nature, but for some very
 2. considerable end. For otherwise when he did it, it would not be taken notice of, nor thought to be an alteration of the order of nature, but only some rare contingencies which lie hid in the order of causes, but only break out at some times: of which sort are all those things which the ignorant world is apt to account as Prodigies. Of all which rare contingencies in nature, I say, as the Roman Orator doth, *Si quod raro fit, id portentum putandum est, sapientem esse portentum est; sapius enim mulum peperisse arbitror, quam sapientem fuisse.* If all rare contingencies be accounted prodigies, a Wise man is certainly the greatest Prodigy. But these are quite of another nature from true miracles, which are immediately produced by a Divine power, and intended for a confirmation of some Divine Testimony. There are now several weighty reasons which might make miracles necessary in the time of our Saviour, as an evidence of his Divine Authority and power.

Cicero de Div.
 l. 2.

1. That he came to take down that way of worship which had been at first settled by a power of miracles in Moses. God would not be so much wanting to the faith of that people
 which

which had received their *Law* by *signs* and *wonders* from *Heaven*, but that there should be as *strong* an *evidence* given to them, that the *fulness* of *time* was come when that *dispensation* was to have an *end*, and to give *place* to one more perfect, which was to be *established* instead of it. Upon which account the *Jews* might *rationally enquire* after a *sign* where any *new revelation* was discovered, which might null the *obligation* of any former *Law*: and when they enquire so much after a *sign*, our *Saviour* doth not reject the *enquiry* as in it self *unreasonable*, but as made in an *unreasonable* manner; for they would not be contented with the *miracles* which our *Saviour* wrought, which sufficiently manifested a *Divine power*; but all that they desired was a *sign from Heaven*, i. e. such as were done at the giving of the *Law*, the *thundering* and *lightnings* there, or as the *raining of Manna in the wilderness*; now our *Saviour* justly checks this demand as *importune* and *impudent*; partly as knowing upon what account they asked it, meerly to tempt him; and not out of any *real desire* of *satisfaction*; and partly because of that *abundant evidence* which was given in the *miraculous cures* which were wrought by him, which were more *suitable* to that *design* of doing good in the world, than all the *Thunderclaps* on *Mount Sinai* were; neither were the people in a *condition* to be fed by *Manna* as they were in the *wilderness*, God graciously suiting the *discoveries* of his power to the *peculiar advantages* of the people which they were made to, and the *dispensation* they ushered in. Those terrible *signs* at *Mount Sinai* being very *suitable* to the *severity* and *rigour* of the *Law*: and the *gracious miracles* of our *Saviour*, to the *sweetness* and *grace* of the *Gospel*. And on this account our *Saviour* charged the *Jews* with *hypocrisie* in requiring a σημεῖον as something above *Naturalis*, a *prodigy* rather than a *miracle*; An evil and *adulterous generation* seeketh after a *sign*, and there shall no sign be given it but that of the *Prophet Jonas*, i. e. this people which are so far from the *faith* of *Abraham*, (and therefore are *supposititious Children*) that no *miracles* which I do, will convince them, but they seek only to have their *humours* gratified more than their *faith* confirmed by some *prodigy*

Matth. 12. 38.
16. 1.

Matth. 12. 39.

Joh. 2. 18.

John 5. 36.

10. 25.

John 15. 24.

Joh. 1. 49.

2. 11.

from *Heaven*, shall not by me be thus gratified; but having done enough already to persuade them, if they had any heart to believe, instead of a sign from *Heaven*, they shall have onely one from the *Earth*, and that not so much intended for the conversion of such wilful Unbelievers, as for the testifying my Innocency to the world, viz. his resurrection from the dead. And so elsewhere when the *Jews* demand a sign, it was upon the doing of that, which if they had attended to, had been a sufficient sign to them, viz. his driving the buyers and sellers out of the Temple: Which being a thing permitted by the Sanhedrin and the Priests, how could they think so mean a person, in appearance, as our Saviour was, could ever have effected it, had it not been for a Divine Majesty and power which appeared in him? It was not then the expectation of miracles which our Saviour rebuked in the *Jews*, but being unsatisfied with the kind and nature of our Saviours miracles. It was their hypocrisie and unbelief which Christ condemned, notwithstanding the frequent miracles which he wrought among them: For we plainly find our Saviour very often appealing to his miracles as the evidences of his Divine Commission: If I had not done the works among them, which no man else did, they had not had sin, i. e. in not believing me. Whereby Christ both sets forth the necessity of his working miracles in order to the conviction of the world, and the greatness of the miracles which he wrought; he did those no man else had done, no not Moses and Elias, in curing all manner of diseases by the word of his mouth; and those miracles which they had done, he exceeded them in the manner of doing them. Moses fed them with bread from Heaven, but Christ multiplied on earth some few loaves and fishes, to the feeding of many thousands: Elias indeed raised one from the dead; but Christ raised more, and one after he had been four days in the grave. And upon this very evidence of our Saviours miracles we find many believing on him. And even of those who were not so far wrought upon as to become followers of Christ, as the only Messiah, yet we find them so far persuaded by the power of his miracles, that they looked upon him as a great Prophet, or one that was sent from God; So Nicodemus;

who

who came first to Christ more as a rational enquirer than a believer, yet we see he was persuaded that he was a teacher come from God, because no man could do the miracles which Christ did, unless God were with him. And before him many of the Jews at Jerusalem believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did; yet these persons Christ would not trust himself with, because he knew their hearts were not subdued to his doctrine, though their understandings were convinced by his miracles. And after this others of the Jews that looked not on him as the *Messias*, yet it is said they believed on him on the account of his miracles. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? Although herein they were most unreasonable in believing the evidence, and not the truth attested by it, in believing Christ to be one sent from God by his miracles, and yet not believing him to be the *Messias*, which was the thing attested by them. Not that meer miracles would prove the person to be the *Messias* who did them, but the miracles proved the testimony to be Divine; now that which Christ delivered to them as a Divine Testimony, was his being the *Messias*, and therefore by the same reason they believed him to be one sent from God, they ought to have believed him to be the *Messias*; for one sent from God could never falsifie in the main of his message, as this was of our Saviours preaching. And hence it is observable our Saviour did not shew forth his Divine power till he entred upon his office of preaching, thereby making it appear he intended this as the grea^tevidence of the truth of the doctrine which he preached to them. And herein the blind man in the Gospel saw more truth and reason than the whole Court of Sanhedrin, before which in probability he was convened about his cure by Christ; for when they sought to get something out of him in disparagement of our Saviours person and miracle, he sharply and roundly tells them, when they said they knew God spake to Moses, but for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. Why herein, saith he, is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and

John 3. 2.

John 2. 23.

John 7. 31.

Joh. 9. 29, 30.
ver. 33.

yet he hath opened mine eyes. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing (as though he had said) Is it not plain that this man is employed by God in the world by the miracles which he doth? for otherwise God would not so readily assist him in doing such great works; for we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth; i. e. If this man pretended a Commission from Heaven falsely (whereby he would be the greatest of sinners) can we think God would so miraculously assist him? but we know by our Law, if one comes with a Commission from God, and draws men not to Idolatry, which is meant by a worshipper of God, such a one God is present with, and we are bound to believe him. And for this very miracle, or curing one born blind, was the like ever heard of before? did ever Moses or the Prophets do it? Thus we see what strong rational evidence there was in this miracle of Christ in the judgement of this blind man, which he uttered with so much reason before the Court of Sanhedrin, when he knew how like he was to be excommunicated for it; and yet this very person was as yet ignorant that Christ was the true Messiah, as appears by the sequel of the chapter; but upon Christ's revelation of himself to him, he presently believed on him. How strangely irrational were the Jews then in rejecting our Saviour when his miracles not only exceeded those of Moses both in number and quality; but which was more, they saw themselves the miracles which Christ did, but they received those of Moses only upon the credit of their Fathers! And from the strength of the evidence arising from the power of miracles it is that St. Peter tells the promiscuous Assembly, Act. 2. 22. That Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among them, by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of them, as they themselves also knew. He appeals to their own knowledge, which he would not certainly have done, had it not been in a case beyond all dispute among them. Which was a thing so notorious among them, that we find the Pharisees themselves confessing it, What do we? For this man doth many miracles. Now then in a Nation whose

ver. 31.

ver. 36.

ver. 38.

Joh. 11. 47.

whose religion had been established by miracles, and the certainty of the truth of it, among those who then professed it, did depend so much upon the constant credit which the report of the miracles done at the settling of their Law had among them; what could be a more rational convincing way of proceeding, than for our Saviour to manifest by a greater power of miracles in himself the undoubted credentials of his commission from Heaven; and that he was the true *Messias*, which was foretold by their own most sacred and authentical records? Which will appear more,

Because the power of Miracles did evidently declare that he Sect. 3.
was the very person promised. For if the exact correspond- 2.
ency of the event to the predictions in a Nation owning

them as Divine, be an undoubted evidence that they are exactly fulfilled, our Saviour was most certainly the person so often spoken of in the Old Testament. For many of the Prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messias, if they were not fulfilled in Christ, in the conditions the Jews have been in since their dispersion, (which fell out exactly according to the prediction of Christ) it is impossible they should be fulfilled at all. So that either the predictions must lose their Divine authority, or they must be accomplished in our Blessed Saviour. For as Tertullian sharply C. *Judeos c. 3.*
says to the Jew, Redde statum Judae quem Christus inven-
niat, & alium contende venire; let the people of the Jews be in their former condition, and then plead for a Messias to come. For can any thing be more plain than that the Messias was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea? but where is that now, and how long since the Jews enjoyed any civil Polity there? what is become of the second Temple in the time of which the desire of all nations should come? Is not Jerusalem already destroyed, and the oblation there long since ceased, which was to come to pass so soon after the Messias, and did accordingly? Is not the Scepter yet departed from Judah, and the Lawgiver from between his feet, and is not Shiloh yet come? What strange unintelligible weeks were those of Daniel, if they were extended to so indefinite a space of time as the Jews pretend? and if indefinite, what certain ground could from thence be gathered of any time wherein their

accomplishment was to be expected? But not to expatiate on those things which are already so largely proved beyond all possibility of contradiction, by the *antient and modern learned writers* against the *Jews*, To insist therefore on our present business; are not the *Prophecies* concerning the *miracles* which the *Messias* should work, exactly fulfilled in *Christ*? Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an Hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. He must be a great stranger in the History of the New Testament that is to seek for an exact fulfilling of this Prophecie. Nay, and the Jewish Midrasch upon Psal. 146. 8. saith that when *Messias* comes, he should open the eyes of the blind; and the Jews themselves often speak of the great miracles which the *Messias* should do when he appears; and therefore out of their own mouths will they be condemned, when the miracles of *Christ* make it so evident that he was the true *Messias*. Hence when *John Baptist* sent his Disciples to *Christ* for them to be fully satisfied concerning him, *Christ* gives this answer to them; he bids them tell him the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the Lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, &c. as though the mentioning of these miracles was sufficient to make it appear to them who he was whom they came to enquire after. And therefore it is observable that *John Baptist* himself, though greater than the Prophets, nay than whom there was not a greater born of women by our Saviours own Testimony; yet of him it is said, that he wrought no miracle: of which no account can be given so probable and rational, as that *God* in his infinite wisdom was pleased so to order it, that the evidence of our Saviours being the *Messias* might be made more clear by the miracles which he wrought; that the minds of people might not be distracted between *John* and *Christ*; he therefore reserved the glory of miracles wholly to the name of *Christ*, that there might be no pretence of a competition between *John* and him.

Another reason of the necessity of miracles in our Saviour by way of rational evidence, is, the overthrowing the power and Kingdom of the Devil in the world. For which purpose

Isa. 35. 5, 6.

V. Grot. in Joh.
9. 32.

Mat. 11. 5.

Mat. 11. 9, 11.
Joh. 10. 41.

Seet. 4.
3.

purpose it is observable that the *Devil* had scarce ever greater power over the *bodies* of men as well as their *souls*, than at that time; thence we read of such a multitude of *Demoniacks* in the *Gospel*. For it seems very harsh to interpret those meerly of *Epileptical* and *Lunatick* persons, both because the *δαμονιζόμενοι*, & *σελυσιαζόμενοι* & *παρελυτικοί* *Matth. 4. 24.* are mentioned *distinctly*, and that it appears by the *primitive Church* afterwards how frequent it was to eject the *Devil* out of possessed persons. Nay so far am I from thinking that the *Demoniacks* were meer *Lunaticks*, that I rather think with *Vossius* that the *Lunaticks* were truly *Demoniacks*, only they *De Idololatr. l. 2. c. 19.* were not constantly under the power of the *Devil*, but as their *paroxysmes* returned upon them, the *Devil* loving to fish in such troubled waters. And thence the same person is called a *Lunatick* in one place, who is called a *Demoniack* in another; because he did *ruere in principiis lunationum*, as the *Arabick* version expresseth it; or as *Rusticus Elpidius* more fully plains it,

*Repererat in medium rabies horrenda furoris,
Demonis afflatu, propria qui peste nocivus
Allidit capras fœdo discrimine mentes,
Menstrua decidos cum Luna recolligit ignes.*

Lib. 5.

Theophylact is of opinion, that the *Jews* in the time of our *Saviour* supposed, that the *souls* of dead men became *Demons*, and thence we read in Scripture of the *Demoniacks* among the *Tombes*: but it is far more probable which *Grotius* conceives, that the *Jews* were of opinion, that the *souls* of dead men did hover up and down about their *bodies*, and that these were so long under the *Devils* power, which many of the *Jews* to this day believe and make use of the instance of the *Pythons* raising *Samuel*; on which account the *Devils* to favour an opinion so advantageous to their interest, might appear with greater terror and fury about their burying places, as we see they did in those possessed persons. But on whatever account it was, we find it evident that about the time of our *Saviours* appearance, and some time after, the truly *δερυνόμενοι* were very frequent; whether it were that

Mat. 8. 28.

the

the Devil by such frequent possessions of persons, and making them to do such strange things, might thereby endeavour to invalidate the evidence of our Saviours miracles (from whence it is probable the Pharisees raised their calumny, that Christ did miracles by Beelzebub, because they saw so many strange appearances caused by possessed persons) or whether it were through the admirable providence of God, which might give Satan the greater liberty at that time, on purpose to heighten the glory of our Saviour in dispossessing of him, and thereby to give the highest rational evidence, that his power was of God, which tended so much to the destruction of the Kingdom of Satan.

Seck. 5.

And hence the Primitive Christians did so much triumph, and as it were insult over the Devil where ever they found him, making him to remove his lodgings from possessed persons, by a writ of ejection from the name of Christ. Thence Origen rationally concludes that Christ had his power given him from above, because at his very name the Devils forsook the bodies which they had possessed. Ἐν ᾧ μὴ δέδοκεν ὡς αὐτῷ

Orig. c. Cels. l. 3.

δοθεῖσαι οὐσίας, ἐκ αὐτοῦ καὶ δαίμονες τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ ἀπασφαλτομένῳ μόνον εἰκόνες ἀνεχώρουν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὡς αὐτοῦ πολεμιζόμενον. And he elsewhere tells us, that even the meanest sort of Christians with-

Lib. 7.

out any ceremony, but meerly by their prayers, did ordinarily eject the Devil out of mens bodies: ὡς ὅτι πάντες ἐν ᾧ ἰδῶν τὸ ποιεῖτον παρέπαινον, πειρασμοῦ τῆς ἐν τῷ λόγῳ χρίσεως χάρις τὸ τοῦ δαιμόνων ἐξελθεῖν καὶ ἀδυνάτους, ἐπὶ πάντως δόμον πρὸς τὸ ἡπηνθῆναι καὶ εἶξαι ὑπερβαλεῖν ἀπὸ ψυχῆς ἀνδρώπης καὶ σώματος τοσοῦτον καὶ δυνατὸν ἐν ταῖς λογικαῖς ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως ἀποδείξεσι. Ordinary Christians, saith he, most commonly do this, the grace of Christ by its word thereby discovering the contemptibleness and infirmity of the Devils, that in order to their ejection they did not so much as want any learned or experienced Christian. And for this they

P. 31. ed. Orig.

appeal to the Heathens themselves, as appears not only by the challenge of Tertullian already mentioned, but by the Testimony of almost all of them who have writ against the Heathens in vindication of the Christian Religion. Thence Minutius Felix, Hæc omnia sciunt plerique, pars vestrum, ipsos demones de semetipsis confiteri, quoties à nobis tormentis verborum, & orationis incendiis de corporibus exiguntur. Ipse

Saturnus

Saturnus & Scrapis, & Jupiter, & quicquid demonum colitis, victi dolore quod sunt eloquuntur, nec utique in turpitudinem sui; nonnulli præsertim vestrum assistentibus, mentuntur. Ipsi testibus eos esse Demonas, de se verum consentientibus credite; adjurati enim per Deum verum & solum, inviti, miseri corporibus inhorrescunt; & vel exiliunt statim, vel evanescent gradatim, prout fides patientis adjuvat, aut gratia curantis aspirat. Can we now think the Devil should not only forsake his Tyranny over the bodies of men, but let go so advantageous a pillar of his Tyranny over the consciences of men in Idolatrous worship, as the concealing himself was, had he not been forced to it by a power far greater than his own? So Cyprian ad Demetrianum, appeals to him being the Proconsul of Africa, about the same thing (who had written sharply against the Christians) for speaking of the Devils whom they worshipped in their Idols. *O si audire eos velles & videre, quando à nobis adjurantur & torquentur Spiritualibus* Ad Demetr. s. 12. *flagris & verborum tormentis de obsessis corporibus ejiciuntur, quando ejulantes & gementes voce humana, & potestate divina flagella & verbera sentientes, venturum judicium consentiunt; veni & cognosce vera esse que dicimus: and a little after, videbis sub manu nostra stare victos, & tremere captivos, quos tu suspicis & veneraris ut Dominos.* Did ever any of the Heathen Magicians (of which there were good store) extort such things from the Devils as the Christians did meerly by their prayers, and invocations of the name of God and Christ? did they ever make them confess to be what they were, not only in possessed bodies but in their Temples too? that was beyond the power of their Ephesian letters, or any of their Magical incantations. Did the Devils ever dread so much the name of Socrates or Aristides as they did that of God and of Christ? Of which Lactantius thus speaks, *Quo audito* De justitia lib. 5. c. 21. *tremunt, exclamant & uri se verberarique testantur, & interrogati qui sint, quando venerint, quando in hominem irrepserint, consentiunt sic extorti, & excruciiati virtute divini numinis exulant; propter hæc verbera & minas, sanctos & justos viros semper oderunt.* And even Apollo himself at the name of Christ trembled as much as ever the Pythian Prophetess did in her greatest furies; so Prudentius tells us.

M m

Torquetur

Apotheos.

Torquetur Apollo

Nomine percussus Christi, nec fulmina verbi
 Ferre potest ; agitant miserum tot verbera lingua,
 Quot laudata Dei resonant miracula Christi.

De errore prof.
relig.

L. I. c. Cels.

Mar. 7. 22.

Sect. 6.

Mar. 16. 17.

To these we may add what *Firmicus* saith to the same purpose, *Ecce Demon est quem colis ; cum Dei & Christi ejus nomen audierit, contremiscit, & ut interrogantibus nobis respondeat trepidantia verba, vix se colligit ; adherens homini laceratur, uritur, vapulat, & statim de commissis sceleribus confitetur.* By which Testimonies it appears what power over Satan, when he was in his Kingdom, the Christians by the power of Christ had ; not as though the bare name of Christ had so great an efficacy in the ejection of Devils, as *Origen* seems to be of opinion (in a discourse about the efficacy of names, unworthy of so great a Philosopher) but that God might manifest to the world the truth that was contained in that name, he did give a power to such as made use of it, of working miracles by it. And thence we read in Scripture, that some who were not thoroughly Christians, but yet professed the truth of the Gospel, and that what they did was for the honour of Christ, had a power of casting out Devils and doing many wonderful things through his name.

By these and many other Testimonies which might be produced out of the Primitive Church, we find an exact accomplishment of our Saviours promise to his Disciples when he took his leave of them : *And these signs shall follow them that believe, In my name shall they cast out Devils, &c.* This power then in the Primitive Church had a twofold argument in it, both as it was a manifestation of the truth of the predictions of our Saviour, and as it was an evidence of the Divine power of Christ, when his name so long after his ascension had so great a command over all the infernal spirits ; and that so evidently that at that time when the Christians did as it were Tyrannize over Satan so in his own territories, yet then the greatest of his Magicians had no power to hurt the bodies of the Christians, which is a thing *Origen* takes much notice of. For when *Celsus* saith from *Diogenes Aegyptius*

Aegyptius that *Magick* could only hurt ignorant and wicked men, and had no power over Philosophers, *Origen* replies, first, that *Philosophie* was no such charm against the power of *Magick*, as appears by *Maragenes* who writ the story of *Apollonius Tyanens*, the famous *Magician* and *Philosopher*, who therein mentions how *Euphrates* and an *Epicurean* (ἐκ ἀθεῖς φιλόσοφοι no vulgar Philosophers) were caught by the *Magick* of *Apollonius* (and although *Philostratus* disown this *History* of *Maragenes* as fabulous, yet he that thinks *Philostratus* for that, to be of any greater credit, is much deceived, of whom *Lud. Vives* gives this true character, that he doth magna Homeri mendacia majoribus mendaciis corrigere, mend one hole and make three) but faith *Origen* as to the *Christians*, this is undoubtedly true: διαβεβαιώμεθα ὅτι ἡμεῖς καὶ τῇ πείρᾳ παρλαβόντες, ὅτι οἱ καὶ χριστιανισμὸν διὰ τῶ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἐν πᾶσι θεοπροπίους θεὸν, καὶ βιώντες κατὰ τὸ ἀαγγέλιον αὐτοῦ, καὶ προσαχθείσας ὅτι ἐν χαῖς συνεχέσμεν καὶ θρόνους νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἡσυχάοι, ὅτε μαρτυροῦμεν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα αἰῶν. This, faith he, we are most certain of and have found it by experience true, that those who according to the principles of Christianity do worship God over all, through *Jesus*, and do live according to the Gospel, being constant in their solemn prayers night and day, are not obnoxious to the power of any *Magick* or Devils whatsoever. Now then if the Devil who had then so much power over others, had none upon the true followers of *Christ*; and if instead of that they had so great a commanding power over the Devil even in things which tended most to his disadvantage, not only dislodging him out of bodies, but out of his Idolatrous Temples; what can be more evident, than that this power which was so efficacious for the overthrowing the Kingdom of *Satan*, must needs be far greater than the power of *Satan* is? For it is an undoubted *Maxime* in natural reason, that whatever is put out of its former place by force and violence, is extruded by something stronger than it self; for if the force on either side were equal, there could be no dispossessing of either; if any thing then be cast out of its former possession unwillingly, it is an undeniable proof there was some power greater than his who was dispossessed. Now we cannot conceive, if there be such malignant spirits as by

De trad. disc.
l. 5.

Cont. Cels. l. 6.
p. 302.

many undeniable proofs it is evident there are, that they should willingly *quit* their *possessions* to such a *doctrine* which tends to the *unavoidable* *ruine* of their *interest* in the world; if then the *power* of this *doctrine* hath *overthrown* the *Devils Kingdom* in the world, wherever it hath been truly *enter-tained*, it must necessarily follow, that this *power* is far *above* the *power* of any *dannèd spirits*. Now what *felly* and *mad-ness* was it in the *Heathens* to worship those for *Gods*, which they could not but see, if they would open their eyes, were under so great *slavery* to a *power* above them, which could make *them* confess what was most to their *disadvantage* in the *presence* of their great *adorers*?

Sett. 7.

Neither ought the many *counterfeits* and *impostures* which have been in the world in this kind since the *establishment* of *Christian Religion* (among the *advancers* of particular *inter-ests* and *designs*) make us *suspect* the *truth* of those things which were done in the first *Ages* of the *Church of Christ*. For first it *stands* to the *greatest reason*, that the *strongest arguments* for the *truth* of a *Religion* ought to be *fetched* from the *ages* of its first *appearance* in the world; if then the *evidence* be *undoubted* as to those *first times*, we ought to *embrace* our *Religion* as *true*, whatever the *impostures* have been among those who have apparently *gone aside* from that *purity* and *simplicity* of the *Gospel*, which had so great *power*. Then secondly, if all that hath been done in this kind of *ejecting Devils*, where *Christianity* is owned, be *acknowledged* for *impostures*; one of these *two things* must be supposed as the ground of it: either that there was no such thing as a *real possession* by the *Devil*, or else there was no such thing as a *dispossessing him*; If the *first*, then hereby will be seen a *confirmation* of our *former argument*, that where *Christianity* is owned, by the *power* of that, the *Devil* is more *curbed* and *restrained*, than where it is not, or else is much *overrun* with *ignorance* and *superstition*. Of the latter, the *ages* of the *Christian Church*, from the 10. *Century* to the *beginning* of the 16 *current*, are a *clear evidence*; Of the *first*, all those who have been *conversant* in the places where *Paganism* or *gross Idolatry* do yet reign, will bring in their *credible Testimonies*, how *tyrannical* the *power* of the *Devil* is.

is yet among them. If it be not so then, where careful *endeavours* have been used for the *retriving* the *antient purity* of *Christian doctrine* and *worship*, we ought to *impute* it to the *power* of him who is *stronger* than *Satan*, who whereever he comes to *dwell*, doth *dispossess* him of his former *habitations*. If the *second* then be *entertained* as the *ground* of *concluding* all things as *impostures*, which are accounted *dispossession* of *Satan*, viz. that he is never really *dispossessed*, then it must either be said, that where he is once *seized*, there is no *possibility* of *ejecting* him; which is to say, that the *Devil* hath an *absolute and infinite power*, and that there is no *power greater* than his, which is to own him for *God*; or else that *God* suffers him to *tyrannize* where and how he will, which is *contrary* to *divine providence*, and the *care* *God* takes of the *world*, and of the *good* of *mankind*; or else lastly, that those *persons* who *pretend* to do it, are not such *persons* who are *armed* so much with the *power* of *Christ*; nor *possessed* with such a *due spirit* of the *Gospel*, which hath *command* over these *infernal spirits*. And this in the *cases* pretended by the great *Juglers* and *Impostures* of the *Christian world*, the *Popish Priests* have been so *notorious*, that none of their own *party* of any great *faith* or *credit* would stand to *vouch* them. And we have this *impregnable argument* against all such *Impostures*, that the *matters* which they by such *actions* would give an *evidence* to, being so *vastly different* from, if not in some things *diametrically opposite* to the first *delivery* and *design* of the *Christian faith*, it is *inconsistent* with the *way* used for the *confirmation* of *Christian Religion* in the first *publishing* of it, to attest the *truth* of such things by any *real miracles*: For so it would *invalidate* the great *force* of the *evidences* of the *truth* of *Christianity*, if the same *argument* should be used for the *proving* of that which in the *judgement* of any *impartial person* was not *delivered*, when the *truth* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* was *confirmed* by so many and *uncontrouled miracles*. But hereby we see what *unconceivable prejudice* hath been done to the *true primitive doctrine* of the *Gospel*; and what *stumbling blocks* have been laid in the way of *considerative persons*, to keep them from embracing the *truly Christian faith*.

by those who would be thought the *infallible directors* of men in it, by making use of the broad-seal of Heaven (set only to the truth of the Scriptures) to confirm their unwritten and superstitious ways of worship. For if I once see that which I looked on as an undoubted evidence of divine power, brought to attest any thing directly contrary to divine revelation; I must either conclude that God may contradict himself by sealing both parts of a contradiction, which is both blasphemous and impossible; or that that society of men which owns such things, is not at all tender of the honour of Christian doctrine, but seeks to set up an interest contrary to it, and matters not what disadvantage is done to the grounds of Religion by such unworthy pretences; and which of these two is more rational and true, let every ones conscience judge. And therefore it is much the interest of the Christian world to have all such frauds and impostures discovered, which do so much disservice to the Christian faith, and are such secret fomenters of Atheism and Infidelity. But how far that promise of our Saviour, that they which believe in his name, shall cast out Devils, and do many miracles, may extend even in these last ages of the world to such generous and primitive-spirited Christians, who out of a great and deep sense of the truth of Christianity and tenderness to the souls of men, should go among Heathens and Infidels, to convert them only to Christ (and not to a secular interest, under pretence of an infallible head) is not here a place fully to enquire. I confess I cannot see any reason why God may not yet for the conviction of Infidels, employ such a power of miracles, although there be not such necessity of it, as there was in the first propagation of the Gospel, there being some evidences of the power of Christianity now, which were not so clear then (as the overthrowing the Kingdom of Satan in the world, the prevailing of Christianity notwithstanding force used against it; the recovery of it from amidst all the corruptions which were mixed with it; the consent of those parties in the common foundations of Christianity, which yet disagree from each other with great bitterness of spirit) though I say it be not of that necessity now, when the Scriptures are conveyed to us in a certain uninterrupted manner; yet God may please

Mat. 16. 17.

please out of his *abundant provision* for the *satisfaction* of the *minds of men*, concerning the *truth of Christian doctrine*, to employ *good men* to do something which may manifest the *power of Christ* to be above the *Devils*, whom they worship. And therefore I should far sooner believe the *relation of the miracles of Xaverius and his Brethren*, employed in the *conversion of Infidels*, than *Lipsius his Virgo Hallensis and Asprecollis*, could it but be made evident to me that the *design of those persons* had more of *Christianity* than *Poperly* in it; that is, that they went more upon a *design to bring the souls of the Infidels to Heaven*, than to enlarge the *authority and jurisdiction of the Roman Church*.

But whatever the *truth of those miracles*, or the *design* Sect. 8.
of those persons were, we have *certain and undoubted evidence* of the *truth of those miracles*, whereby *Christianity* was first *propagated*, and the *Kingdom of Satan* overthrown in the world; *Christ* thereby making it appear that his *power* was greater than the *Devils*, who had *possession*, because he overcame him, took from him all his *armour* wherein he trusted, and divided his *spoils*; i. e. *dispossessed him of mens bodies*, and his *Idolatrous Temples*, silenced his *Oracles*, nonplust his *Magicians*, and at last, when *Christianity* had overcome by *suffering*, wrested the *worldly power and Empire* out of the *Devils hands*, and employed it against himself. Neither may we think, because since that time the *Devil* hath got some ground in the world again by the large spread of *Mahometism*, and the general *corruptions in the Christian world*, that therefore the other was no *argument of divine power*; because the *truth of Christianity* is not *tyed to any particular places*; because such a *falling away* hath been *foretold in the Scripture*, and therefore the *truth of them* is proved by it, and because *God himself* hath *threatned* that those who will not receive the *truth in the love of it*, shall be *given up to strong delusions*. Doth not this then *instead of abating the strength of the argument*, confirm it more, and that nothing is fallen out in the *Christian world*, but what was *foretold by those whom God employed in the converting of it*? But we are neither without some fair *hopes* even from that *divine revelation* which was sealed by *uncontruled evidence*, that there may be yet a
time.

Luk. 11. 21, 22.

time to come when *Christ* will recover his *Churches* to their *pristine purity* and *simplicity*; but withal I think we are not to measure the *future felicity* of the *Church* by outward *splendor* and *greatness* (which too many so strongly fancy) but by a *recovery* of that true *spirit* of *Christianity* which breathed in the *first ages* of the *Church*, whatever the outward condition of the *Church* may be: For if *worldly greatness*, and *ease*, and *riches*, were the first *impairers* of the *purity* of *Christian Religion*, it is hard to conceive how the *restoring* of the *Church* of *Christ* to its true *glory*, can be by the *advancing* of that, which gives so great an occasion to *pride* and *sensuality*, which are so contrary to the *design* of *Christian Religion*; unless we suppose men free from those *corruptions*, which continual experience still tells the world the *Rulers* as well as *members* of the *Christian society* are subject to. Neither may that be wondred at, when such *unevenness* of parts is now discovered in the great *Luminaries* of the world, and the *Sun* himself is found to have his *macula*, as though the *Sun* had a *purple Fever*, or as *Kircher* expresseth it, *Ipse Phœbus, qui rerum omnium in universo natura Theatro aspectabilem longè pulcherrimus omnium opinione est habitus, hoc seculo tandem fumosa facie, ac infecto vultu maculis prodiit; diceret eum variolis laborare senescentem*: I speak not this as though an outward *flourishing* condition of the *Church* were *inconsistent* with its *purity*; for then the way to *refine* it, were to throw it into the *flames* of *persecution*; but that the *advancement* of the *flourishing* condition of the *Church*, is not merely by outward *pomp* and *grandeur*, and that the *purity* of the *Church* is not *inconsistent* with a state of outward *difficulties*, which the experience of the *Primitive Church* gives an *irrefragable demonstration* of. Thus much may serve to shew the *necessity* of a power of *miracles*, conjoynd with the *Christian doctrine*, to manifest the *truth* of it by overthrowing the *Kingdom* of that great *Antichrist* the *Devil*, who had usurped so much *Tyranny* over the world.

Prop. Agonist.
ad Oedipum.
cap. 2.

Seet. 9.

The last reason why a power of miracles was so necessary for confirming the *truth* of the *Gospel*, is, because the *Gospel* was to be propagated over the world without any other rational

nal evidence than was contained in the miracles wrought for the confirmation of it. Now the admirable success which this doctrine found in the world, considering all the circumstances of it, do make it clear what certainty there was that the miracles which were wrought were true, and they were certain evidences that the doctrine attested by them was from God. Now this will appear from these two things.

That no rational account can be given why the Apostles should undertake to publish such a doctrine, unless they had been undoubtedly certain that the Doctrine was true, and they had sufficient evidence to persuade others to believe it. 1.

That no satisfactory account can be given, considering the nature of the doctrine of Christ, and the manner of its propagation, why it should meet with so great acceptance in the world, had there not been such convincing evidence as might fully persuade men of the truth of it. 2.

I begin with the first, from the publishers of this doctrine in the world. All that I here require by way of a Postulatum or supposition, are only these two things, which no man right in his wits I suppose will deny: 1. That men are so far rational agents, that they will not set upon any work of moment and difficulty, without sufficient grounds inducing them to it; and by so much the greater the work is, the more sure and stedfast had the grounds need to be which they proceed upon. 2. That the Apostles or first Publishers of the Christian Doctrine were not men distracted, or bereft of their wits, but acted by principles of common sense, reason and understanding, as other men in the world do: Which if any one should be so far beside his wits as to question, if he have but patience and understanding enough to read and consider those admirable writings of theirs which are conveyed to us by as certain uninterrupted a Tradition as any thing in the world hath been, by that time he will see cause to alter his judgement, and to say that they are not mad, but speak the words of the greatest truth and soberness. These things supposed, I now proceed to the proving the thing in hand, which will be done by these three things; First, That the Apostles could not but know how hazardous an employment the preaching of the Gospel would be to
 Nn them.

them. Secondly, that no motive can be conceived sufficient for them to undertake such an employment, but the infallible truth of the doctrine which they preached. Thirdly, that the greatest assurance they had themselves of the truth of their Doctrine, was by being eye-witnesses of the miracles of Christ.

First, That the Apostles could not but understand the hazard of their employment, notwithstanding which they cheerfully undertook it. That men armed with no external power, nor cried up for their wit and learning, and carrying a doctrine with them so contrary to the general inclinations of the world, having nothing in it to recommend it to mankind but the truth of it, should go about to persuade the world to part with the Religion they owned, and was settled by their laws, and to embrace such a Religion as called them off from all the things they loved in this world, and to prepare themselves by mortification and self-denial for another world, is a thing to humane reason incredible, unless we suppose them acted by a higher spirit than mankind is ordinarily acted by. For what is there so desirous in continual reproaches, and contumelies? what delight is there in racks and prisons? what agreeableness in flames and martyrdoms to make men undergo some, nay all of these rather than disown that doctrine which they came to publish? Yet these did the Apostles cheerfully undergo in order to the conversion of the world to the truth of that doctrine which they delivered to it. And not only so, but though they did foresee them, they were not discouraged from this undertaking by it. I confess, when men are upon hopes of profit and interest in the world, engaged upon a design which they promise themselves impunity in, having power on their side, though afterwards things should fall out contrary to their expectation, such persons may die in such a cause, because they must, and some may carry it out with more resolution, partly through an innate fortitude of spirit, heightened with the advantages of Religion, or an Enthusiastick temper. But it is hard to conceive that such persons would have undertaken so hazardous an employment, if beforehand they had foreseen what they must have undergone for it. But now the Apostles did foreknow that bonds and imprisonment, nay death it self must be undergone in a violent

manner, for the sake of the doctrine which they preached; yet notwithstanding all this, they go boldly and with resolution on with their work, and give not over because of any hardships and persecutions they met withal. One of the chiefest of them, St. Peter, and as forward as any in Preaching the Gospel, had the very manner of his death foretold him by Christ himself, before his Ascension; yet soon after we find him preaching Christ in the midst of those who had crucified him, and telling them to their faces the greatness of their sin in it, and appealing to the miracles which Christ had done among them, and bidding them repent and believe in him whom they had crucified, if ever they would be saved: And this he did, not only among the people who gave their consent to the crucifying of Christ; but soon after, being convened together with John, before the Court of Sanhedrin (probably the very same which not long before had sentenced Christ to death) for a miracle wrought by them, with what incredible boldness doth he to their faces tell them of their murdering Christ; and withal, that there was no other way to salvation but by him whom they had crucified! Be it known unto you all (saith Peter to the Sanhedrin) and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ whom ye have crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. What an heroick freedom of spirit appears in these words! what magnanimity and courage was there now in that person, who durst in the face of this Court tell them of their murder, and that there was no salvation but by him whom they had crucified! Well might they wonder at the boldness of the men, who feared not the same death which they had so lately brought their Lord and Master to.

Joh. 21. 19.

Act. 2. 22, 23.

38.

Act. 3. 14, 15,

16, 19.

Act. 4. 5.

Act. 4. 10. 12.

Neither was this singly the case of Peter, and John, but all the rest of the Apostles undertook their work with the same resolution and preparation of Spirit to undergo the greatest hardship in the world for the sake of the truths they Preached. And accordingly as far as Ecclesiastical History can ascertain us of it, they did all but John (and that to make good

Sect. 10.

Joh. 21. 22.

the prediction of Christ) suffer violent deaths by the hands of those who persecuted them merely for their doctrine. And which is most observable, when Christ designed them first of all for this work, he told them before-hand of reproaches, persecutions, all manner of hardships, nay of death it self

Matth. 10. 17, 18, 21, 22, 28. which they must undergo for his sake. All that he gave them by way of encouragement, was, that they could only kill the body and not the soul, and therefore that they should fear him only who could destroy both body and soul in Hell; all the support they had, was, an expectation in another world, and that animated them to go through all the hardships of this. Where do we ever read of any such boldness and courage in the most knowing Philosophers of the Heathens? with what faintness and misgiving of mind doth Socrates speak in his famous discourse supposed to be made by him before his death? how uncertainly doth he speak of a state of immortality? and yet in all probability Plato set it forth with all advantages imaginable. Where do we ever find that ever any of the great friends of Socrates, who were present at his death, as Phædo, Cebes, Crito and Simmias, durst enter the Areopagus, and condemn them there for the murder of Socrates, though this would be far short of what the Apostles did? why were they not so charitable as to inform the world better of those grand truths of the being of God and immortality of souls, if at least they were fully convinced of them themselves? Why did not Plato at least speak out, and tell the world the truth, and not disguise his discourses under feigned names, the better to avoid accusation and the fate of Socrates? how doth he mince his excellent matter, and plays as it were at Bo peep with his Readers, sometimes appearing and then pulling in his horns again? It may not be an improbable conjecture that the death of Socrates was the foundation of the Academy: I mean of that cautelous doctrine of withholding assent, and being both pro and con, sometimes of this side, and sometimes of that: for Socrates his death hath made all his friends very fearful of being too dogmatical. And Plato himself had too much riches and withall too much of a Courtier in him to hazard the dear prison of his soul, viz. his body, merely for an athereal vehicle. He had rather let his

soul

Soul flutter up and down in terrestrial matter, or the cage it was pent up in, than hazard too violent an opening of it by the hands of the Areopagus. And the great Roman Orator among the rest of Plato's sentiments had learnt this too; for although in his discourses he hath many times sufficiently laid open the folly of the Heathen worship and Theology, yet he knows how to bring himself off safe enough with the people; and will be sure to be dogmatical only in this, that nothing is to be innovated in the Religion of a Common-wealth, and that the customs of our Ancestors are inviolably to be observed. Which principles had they been true as they were safe for the persons who spake them, the Christian Religion had never gained any entertainment in the world; for where ever it came, it met with this potent prejudice that it was looked on as an innovation, and therefore was shrewdly suspected by the Governours of Common-wealths, and the Preachers of it punished as factious and seditious persons; which was all the pretext the wise Politicians of the world had for their cruel and inhumane persecutions of such multitudes of peaceable and innocent Christians. Now when these things were foretold to the Apostles themselves before their going abroad so plainly, that with the same faith they did believe the doctrine they Preached to be true, they must believe that all these things should come to pass, what courage and magnanimity of spirit was it in them thus to encounter dangers and as it were court the flames? Nay and before the time was come that they must dye, to seal the truth of their doctrine, their whole life was a continual peregrination, wherein they were as so many Jobs in pilgrimage, encountered with perils and dangers on every side; of which one of the most painful and successful, St. Paul hath given in such a large inventory of his perils, that the very reading of them were enough to undo a poor Epicurean Philosopher, and at once to spoil him of the two pillars of his happiness, the quietness of his mind and ease of his body. Thus we see what a hazardous employment that was which the Apostles went upon, and that it was such as they very well understood the difficulty of before they set upon it.

2 Cor. 6. 4, 5, 8, 9.

Secondly, We cannot find out any rational motive which Sect. 11.

could carry them through so huzardous an employment, but the full convictions of their minds of the undoubted truth and certainty of the doctrine which they delivered. We find before that no vulgar motives in the world could carry them upon that design which they went upon; Could they be led by ambition and vain glory who met with such reproaches where ever they went; and not only persecutions of the tongue, but the sharper ones of the hands too? We never read of any but the *Primitive Christians* who were ambitious of being *Martyrs*, and thought long till they were in the flames: which made *Arrius Antonius* being *Proconsul* of *Asia*, when *Christians* in multitudes beset his tribunal and thronged in to be condemned, say to them, ὦ θεοὶ, εἰ θέλητε ἀποθνήσκειν, κρημνὲς ἢ βεγ' ἔχετε. O miserable people, had not ye wayes enough to end your lives at home, but ye must croud for an execution? This was a higher ambition by far than any of those *mancia gloria*, those *Chamaleons* that lived on the breath of applause, the *Heathen Philosophers* ever reached to, who were as *Tertullian* expresseth it, *homines gloria & eloquentia solius libidinosi*, unsatiable thirsters after the honour and eloquence of the world; but the Spirit of a *Christian* did soar too high to quarry on so mean a prey. When the more sober *Heathens* had taken a stricter notice of the *carriages* and *lives* of the *Preachers* of the *Gospel* and all their genuine followers, they instead of the common and rude name of *impostours*, gave them a more civil title of *Philosophers*, and looked upon their

Tertul. ad Scapul. c. 5.

Apolog. c. 47.

Apolog. c. 46.

doctrine as a sublimer kind of *Philosophy*, non utique divinum negotium existimant sed magis Philosophia genus, as *Tertullian* tells us, because the *Philosophers* pretended so much to moral virtues which they saw the *Christians* so excellent in; but as *Tertullian* there replies, nomen hoc Philosophorum Daemonia non fugat, The Devil was never afraid of a *Philosophers* beard, nor were diseases cured by the touch of a *Philosophick pallium*. There was something more *Divine* in *Christians* than in the grave *Philosophers*; and that not only in reference to their lives, and the *Divine* power which was seen in them, but in reference to the truth and certainty of their doctrine, it being a true character given of both, by that same excellent writer in behalf of the *Christians* of his time:

Verita-

Veritatem Philosophi quidem affectant, possident autem Christiani; what the Philosophers desired only, the Christians enjoy, which was Truth: and as he elsewhere more fully speaks, mimice Philosophi affectant veritatem, & affectando corrumpunt, ut qui gloriam captant; Christiani eam necessario appetunt & integri præstant, ut qui salutis sue curant. Truth is the Philosophers mistress which by courting he vitiates and corrupts, locking at nothing but his own glory: but truth is the Christians Maïron whose directions he observes and follows, because he regards no glory but that to come. And to let them further see what a difference there was between a Christian and a Philosopher, he concludes that discourse with these words, *Quid adeo simile Philosophus & Christianus? Græcia Discipulus & cœli? fama negotiator & vita? verborum & factorum operator? rerum ædificator & destructor? amicus & inimicus erroris? veritatis interpolator & integrator? furator ejus & custos?* As much distance (saith he) as there is between Greece and Heaven, between applause and eternal glory, between words and things, between building and destroying, between truth and error, between a plagiarist and corrupter of truth, and a preserver and advancer of it; so much is there between a Philosopher and a Christian. The Heathens might suspect indeed some kind of affinity between the first Preachers of the Gospel and the ancient Sophists of Greece, because of their frequent going from place to place, and pretending a kind of Enthusiasm as they did: but as much difference as there is between a Knight Errant and Hercules, between a Mountebank and Hippocrates, that and much greater there is between a Greek Sophist and an Apostle. Socrates in Plato's *Euthydemus* hath excellently discovered the vanity and futility of those persons under the persons of *Euthydemus* and *Dionysodorus*, and so likewise in his *Protagoras*; their intent was only like the Retiaries in the Roman Spectacles to catch their adversaries in a net; to intangle them with some captious question or other; but how vastly different from this was the design of the Apostles who abhor'd those endless contentions which then were in the Heathen world; and came to shew them that Truth which was revealed with an intent of making them better men!

*Ad nationes l.
1. c. 4.*

Apol. c. 46.

We:

Sect. 12.

We see the *Apostles* were not carried forth by any mean and vulgar motives, neither did they drive on any private ends of their own; all that they minded was the promoting of the doctrine which they preached. Nay they accounted no hazards comparable with the advantage which the world enjoyed through the propagation of the Christian Religion. This shewed a truly noble and generous spirit in them which would not be hindered from doing the world good, though they found so bad entertainment from it; yea they rejoiced in their greatest sufferings which they underwent in so good a cause; wherein those Primitive Christians who were the genuine followers of the *Apostles*, did so far imitate them, that, *etiam damnati gratias agunt*, they gave the Judges thanks that they thought them worthy to lose their lives in a cause which they had reason to triumph in, though they died for it. And when any of them were apprehended, they discovered so little fear of punishment, *ut unum solummodo quod non ante fuerint pœniteret*, that nothing troubled them so much as that they had been Christians no sooner, as one of their number speaks. And when the Heathens usually scoffed at them and called them *Sarmentarii* and *Semarii* because they were burned upon the Cross, one of them in the name of the rest answers, *hic est habitus victoria nostra, hæc palmata vestis, tali curru triumphamus*; the Cross was only their triumphant Chariot which carried them sooner to Heaven. Now this courage and resolution of spirit which was seen in the first planters of Christianity in the world made all serious and inquisitive persons look more narrowly into those things which made men slight so much the common bug bears of humane nature, sufferings and death. *Quis enim non contemplatione ejus concutitur, ad requirendum quid intus in re sit? quis non ubi requisivit accedit? ubi accessit pati exoptat?* These sufferings made men enquire; this enquiry made them believe; that belief made them as willing to suffer themselves as they had seen others do it before them. Thus it appeared to be true in them, *exquisitor quaque crudelitas, illecebra magis est scilicet; plures efficitur quoties metimur à vobis; semen est sanguis Christianorum*; The cruelty of their enemies did but increase their number; the harvest of
their

Tert. Apol. c.
c. 46.Minutius Fe-
lix.Tert. Apol. c.
56.

Id. ib.

their pretended justice was but the seed-time of Christianity, and no seed was so fruitful as that which was steeped in the blood of Martyrs. Thence Justin Martyr ingenuously saith of himself, that while he was a Platonick Philosopher, he derided and scoffed at the Christians; but when he considered their great courage and constancy in dying for their profession, he could not think those could possibly be men wicked and voluptuous, who when offers of life were made them, would rather choose death than deny Christ. By which he found plainly that there was a higher spirit in Christianity than could be obtained by the sublime notions and speculations of Plato, and that a poor ignorant Christian would do and suffer more for the sake of Christ than any of the Academy in defence of their master Plato. Now since all men naturally abhor sufferings, what is it which should so powerfully alter the nature and disposition of Christians above all other persons, that they alone should seem in that to have forgot humanity, that not only with patience, but with joy they endured torments and abode the flames? What! were they all possessed with a far more than Stoical Apathy, that no sense of pain could work at all upon them? or were they all besotted and infatuated persons that did not know what it was they underwent? It is true some of the more blind and wilful Heathens derided them as such; but who were the more infatuated, let any sober person judge: they who slighted and rejected a doctrine of so great concernment, which came attested with so much resolution and courage in the professors of it; or they who were so far perswaded of the truth of it, that they would rather die than deny it? dicimus & palam dicimus, & vobis torquentibus lacerati & cruenti vociferamur, Deum colimus per Christum. They were not ashamed to believe in the blood of Christ even when their own blood ran down before their eyes, and confess Christ with their mouths when their bodies were upon the rack. Certainly then there were some very powerful and convincing arguments which buoyed up the spirits of true Christians in that deluge of sufferings which they were to swim through; it must be a strong and well grounded faith which would hold out under so great tryals, and they could not be to seek for

*Tertul. Ap. cap.
21.*

the most *perswasive motives* to faith, who were so ready to give an account to others of the hope that was in them, and to *perswade* all other persons to the imbracing of it. With what face and confidence otherwise could they *perswade* men to embrace a doctrine so dangerous as that was, had there not been motives sufficient to bear up against the weight of sufferings, and arguments *perswasive* to convince them of the undoubted certainty of that doctrine which they encouraged them to believe?

Sect. 13.

Now that which appears to have been the main ground of satisfaction to the Primitive Christians as to the truth and certainty of the Doctrine of Christ, was this, that the Doctrine of the Gospel was at first delivered to the world by those persons who were themselves eye witnesses of all the miracles which our Saviour wrought in confirmation of the truth of what he spake. They were such persons who had been themselves present, not only to hear most of our Saviours admirable discourses when he was in the world, but to see all those glorious things which were done by him, to make it appear that he was immediately sent from God. Let us now appeal to our own faculties, and examine a little what rational evidence could possibly be desired, that the doctrine of the Gospel was true, which God did not afford to the world? What could the persons who were the auditors of our Saviour desire more as an evidence that he came from God, than his doing such things which were certainly above any created power, either humane or Diabolical, and therefore must needs be Divine? What could other persons desire more who were not present at the doing of these miracles, but that the report of them should be conveyed to them in an undoubted manner by those persons who were eye-witnesses of them, and made it appear to the world they were far from any intention of deceiving it? Now this makes the Apostles themselves in their own writings (though they were divinely inspired) appeal to the rational evidence of the truth of the things, in that they were delivered by them who were eye witnesses of them. There St. Peter speaks thus to the dispersed Jews, &

2 Pet. I. 16.

ἡμεῖς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῷ ᾧ ἡμεῖς

μεγαλειότης. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty. The power and coming of Christ which the Apostle speaks of, was not as some improbably conceive, either his general coming to judgement upon the world, or his particular coming upon the Nation of the Jews; but by an *Hendyades*, by his power and coming is meant his powerful appearance in the world, whereby he mightily discovered himself to be the Son of God. Now this faith the Apostle, was not σεοφισμὸς μύθος, not like the Heathen Mythology concerning the παρσεία & ἐπιφανεία of their Gods among them (which were so frequently believed among them, that *Dionysius Halicarnassensis* condemns the *Epicureans*, because they did deride τὰς ἐπιφανείας τῶν θεῶν, the appearances of their Gods in the world) now faith the Apostle, assure your selves, this is no such appearance of a God on earth as that among the Heathens was; for faith he, we our selves who declare these things were ἐνώπιον, we fully understood this μέγα μυστήριον this great mysterie of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, for we saw his μεγαλειότης, that great majesty which attended him in all which he spake or did; we saw all those μεγάλα τῶ θεοῦ the great things of God, which were manifest in him, all those miraculous operations which were wrought by him. Therefore as this was a great confirmation of the faith of the Apostles themselves that they saw all these things, so we see it was of great concernment to the world in order to their belief that the Gospel was no cunningly devised fable, in that it was delivered by such who were ἐνώπιον eye witnesses of what they declared. To the same purpose St. John speaks *ad conciliandum fidem*, to make it appear how true what they delivered was in the entrance of his Epistle: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the father and was manifested unto us) That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you. We see what great force and weight the Apostle lays upon

Antiq. l. 2. pag. 128

Act. 2. 11.

1 Joh. 1. 1, 2, 3.

- this, that they delivered nothing but what they had seen and heard ; as they heard the doctrine of Christ, so they saw the miracles which he wrought in confirmation of it. St. Luke likewise in the beginning of his Gospel declares that he intended to write nothing but what he had perfect understanding of from such persons who had been *αὐτόματι* eye-witnesses and instruments themselves in part of what was written, for that is meant by *ὅσα ἔβλεπον* : and those things which were written, he saith, were *πεπληροφόρητα ἐν ἡμῖν μαρτύρια*, things which are abundantly proved to be true ; for being matters of fact, there could be no stronger proof of them, than by such who were eye-witnesses of what they spake. And this we find the Apostles themselves very cautious about, in the choice of a new Apostle in the room of Judas. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken from us, must one be ordained to be a witness of his resurrection : For because Christ was mightily declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead, (as that which was the great Seal of our Saviours being the Son of God) therefore we find the Apostles to frequently attesting the truth of the resurrection of Christ, and that themselves were eye-witnesses of it. This Jesus, saith Peter, hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. And again, And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised up from the dead, whereof we are witnesses ; and both Peter and John to the Sanhedrin ; For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. And the whole Colledge of Apostles afterwards, And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. In which words they give them that twofold rational evidence which did manifest the undoubted truth of what they spake ; for they delivered nothing but what themselves were witnesses of, and withal was declared to be true by the power of the Holy Ghost in the miracles which were wrought by and upon believers. Afterwards we read the sum of the Apostles Preaching, and the manner used by them to perswade men of the truth of it, in the words of Peter to Cornelius and his company, *How God anointed*
- Luk. 1. 1, 2, 3.
- Act. 1. 21, 22.
- Act. 2. 32.
3. 15.
4. 20.
5. 32.

anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, for God was with him: And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. By all which we see what care God was pleased to take for the satisfaction of the world in point of rational evidence, as to the truth of the matters which were discovered concerning our Saviour Christ, because he made choice of such persons to be the preachers and writers of these things who were the best able to satisfy the world about them, viz. such as had been eye-witnesses of them.

10. 39, 40, 41, 42.

Now in order to the making it more fully evident what strength there was in this Testimony given by the Apostles to the miracles of Christ, we shall more fully manifest the rational evidence which attended it in these following propositions. Where the truth of a doctrine depends upon a matter of fact, the truth of the doctrine is sufficiently manifested, if the matter of fact be evidently proved in the highest way it is capable of. Thus it is in reference to the doctrine of Christ; for the truth of that is so interwoven with the truth of the story of Christ, that if the relations concerning Christ be true, his doctrine must needs be Divine and infallible. For if it be undoubtedly true, that there was such a person as Christ born at Bethlehem, who did so many miracles, and at last suffered the death of the Cross, and after he had lain three days in the grave rose again from the dead, what reason imaginable can I have to question, but that the Testimony of this person was certainly Divine, and consequently what ever he preached to the world was most certain and undoubted truth. So that if we have clear evidence, as to the truth of these passages concerning our Saviour, we must likewise believe his doctrine, which came attested with such pregnant evidences of a Divine commission which he had from God to the world.

Secl. 4.

Prop. I.

NO

No Prince can think he hath any reason to refuse audience to an Ambassador, when he finds his Credentials such as he may rely upon, although himself doth not see the sealing of them; much less reason have we to question the truth of the doctrine of the Gospel, if we have sufficient evidence of the truth of the matters of fact concerning Christ, in such a way as those things are capable of being proved.

Prop. 2.

The greatest evidence which can be given to a matter of fact, is the attesting of it by those persons who were eye-witnesses of it. This is the Foundation whereon the firmest assent is built, as to any matter of fact; for although we conceive we have reason to suspect the truth of a story, as long as it is conveyed only in a general way, by an uncertain fame and tradition; yet when it comes to be attested by a sufficient number of credible persons who profess themselves the eye-witnesses of it, it is accounted an unreasonable thing to distrust any longer the truth of it, especially in these two cases. 1. When the matter they bear witness to is a thing which they might easily and clearly perceive. 2. When many witnesses exactly agree in the same Testimony.

1. When the matter it self is of that nature that it may be fully perceived by those who saw it: i. e. if it be a common object of sense. And thus it certainly was as to the person and actions of Jesus Christ. For he was of the same nature with mankind; and they had as great evidence that they conversed with Jesus Christ in the flesh, as we can have that we converse one with another. The miracles of Christ were real and visible miracles; they could be no illusions of senses, nor deceits of their eyes; the man who was born blind and cured by our Saviour, was known to have been born blind through all the Country, and his cure was after as publick as his blindness before, and acknowledged by the greatest enemies of Christ at the time of its being done. When Christ raised up the dead man at Naim, it was before much people, and such persons in probability who were many of them present at his death. But lest there might be any suspicion as to him, that he was not really dead, the case is plain and beyond all dispute in Lazarus, who had been to the knowledge of all persons thereabouts dead four days; here could be no deceit at all wher

Joh. 9. 26.

Luke 7. 12.

Joh. 11. 39.

when the stone was rowled away, and Lazarus came forth in the presence of them all. And yet further the death and passion of our Saviour was a plain object of sense done in presence of his greatest adversaries. The souldiers themselves were sufficient witnesses of his being really dead when they came to break his bones, and spared him because they saw he was dead already. At his resurrection the stone was rowled away from the Sepulchre and no body found therein, although the Sepulchre was guarded by souldiers, and the Disciples of Christ all so fearful, that they were dispersed up and down in several places. And that it was the same real body which he rose withal, and no aereal vehicle appears by Thomas his scrupulosity and unbelief, who would not believe unless he might put his hands into the hole of his side, and see in his hands the print of the nails; now our Saviour condescending so far as to satisfy the incredulity of Thomas, hath made it thereby evident that the body which our Saviour rose from the grave with, was the same individual body which before was crucified and buried in the Sepulchre. And we find all the Apostles together upon our Saviours appearance to them after his resurrection, so far from being credulous in embracing a phantasm instead of Christ, that they suspected that it was either a meer phantasm, or an evil spirit which appeared among them; upon which it is said, they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit. Which our Saviour could not beat them off from, but by appealing to the judgement of their senses, *Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have*; and afterwards more fully to convince them, *he did eat in the midst of them*. Now the more suspicious and incredulous the Apostles themselves at first were, the greater evidence is it how far they were from any design of abusing the world in what they after preached unto it, and what strong conviction there was in the thing it self, which was able to satisfy such scrupulous and suspicious persons.

Joh. 20. 25, 27

Luk. 24. 37.

39.

43.

2. When many witnesses concur in the same Testimony. Nothing can disparage more the truth of a testimony, than the counter witness of such who were present at the same actions; but when all the witnesses fully agree not only in the

sub.

substance, but in all material circumstances of the story, what ground or reason can there be to suspect a forgery or design in it : especially when the persons cannot by any fears or threatnings be brought to vary from each other in it ? Thus it is in our present case, we find no real dissent at all mentioned either as to the birth, miracles, life, death, or resurrection of Jesus Christ ; all the witnesses attest the same things, though writing in different places, and upon different occasions ; no alteration in any circumstance of the story, out of any design of pleasing or gratifying any persons by it. Most of our Saviours miracles, not only his Apostles, but the people and his very enemies were witnesses of, whose posterity to this day dare not deny the truth of such strange works which were wrought by him. And for his resurrection, it would be very strange that five hundred persons should all agree in the same thing, and that no torments or death, could bring any of them to deny the truth of it, had there not been the greatest certainty in it.

*Scēt. 15.
Prop. 3.*

There can be no reason to suspect such a testimony which is given by eye-witnesses, but either from questioning their knowledge of the things they speak of, or their fidelity in reporting them. Now there is not the least ground to doubt either of these, in reference to those persons who gave testimony to the world concerning the person and actions of our blessed Saviour.

For first, They were such as were intimately conversant both with the person and actions of Jesus Christ ; whom he had chosen and trained up for that very end, that they might be sufficiently qualified to acquaint the world with the truth of things concerning himself after his resurrection from the dead. And accordingly they followed him up and down wheresoever he went ; they were with him in his solitudes and retirements, and had thereby occasion to observe all his actions, and to take notice of the unspotted innocency of his life. Some of his Disciples were with him in his transfiguration, others in his agony and bloody sweat, they heard the expressions which came from his mouth ; in all which he discovered a wonderful submission to the will of God, and a great readiness of mind to suffer for the good of the world. Now therefore the first
thing

thing cannot at all be questioned, their means of knowing the truth of what they spake.

Neither secondly is there any reason to suspect their fidelity in reporting what they knew: For, 1. The truth of this doctrine wrought so far upon them, that they parted with all their worldly subsistence for the sake of it: Although their riches were not great, yet their way of subsistence in the world was necessary; they left their houses, their wives and children, and all for Christ, and that not to gain any higher perferments in this world (which had they done it would have rendred their design suspicious to the curious and inquisitive world) but they let go at least a quiet and easie life, for one most troublesom and dangerous. So that it is not, how much they parted withal, but how freely they did it, and with what chearfulness they underwent disgraces, persecutions, nay death it self for the sake of the Gospel. Now can it be imagined, that ever men were so prodigal of their ease and lives, as to throw both of them away upon a thing which themselves were not fully assured of the truth of? It had been the highest folly imaginable, to have deceived themselves in a thing of so great moment to them, as the truth of the doctrine which they preached was, because all their hopes and happiness depended upon the truth of that doctrine which they preached. And as Tertullian observes, *non fas est ulli de sua religione memiri*, for saith he, he that sayes he worships any thing besides what he doth, he denies what he doth worship, and transfers his worship upon another, and thereby doth not worship that which he thus denies; Besides, what probability is there men should lye for the sake of that Religion which tells them that those which do so shall not receive the reward which is promised to those who cordially adhere unto it? Nay, they declared themselves to be the most miserable of all persons if their hopes were only in this present life. Can we now think that any who had the common reason of men, would part with all the contentments of this world, and expose themselves to continual hazards and at last undergo death it self for the sake of something which was merely the fiction of their own brains? What should make them so sedulous and industrious in preaching such things that they could say necessity

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1 Cor. 15. 19.

1 Cor. 9. 16. *was laid upon them, yea wo was unto them if they preached not the Gospel, when yet they saw so many woes attending them in the preaching of it, had there not been some more powerful attractive in the beauty and excellency of the doctrine which they preached, than any could be in the ease and tranquillity of this present world? thus we see the fidelity of the Apostles manifested in such a way as no other witnesses were ever yet willing to hazard theirs. And therefore Origen deservedly condemns Celsus of a ridiculous impertinency, when he would parallel the relations of Herodotus and Pindarus concerning Aristens Proconnesius with those of the Apostles concerning Christ; For saith he, did either of these two venture their lives upon the truth of what they writ concerning him, as the Apostles did to attest the truth of what they preached concerning our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?*

L. 3. c. Celsum.
p. 127.

Sect. 16. 2. The fidelity of the Apostles is evident in their manner of reporting the things which they deliver. For if ever there may be any thing gathered from the manner of expression, or the τὸ ἡθὺς καὶ λόγος concerning the particular temper and disposition of the person from whom it comes, we may certainly read the greatest fidelity in the Apostles from the peculiar manner of their expressing themselves to the world. Which they do,

1. With the greatest impartiality: not declaring only what was glorious and admirable to the world, but what they knew would be accounted foolishness by it. They who had sought only to have been admired for the rare discoveries which they brought to the world, would be sure to conceal any thing which might be accounted ridiculous; but the Apostles fixed themselves most on what was most contemptible in the eyes of the world, and what they were most mocked and derided for, that they delighted most in the preaching of, which was the Cross of Christ. Paul was so much in Love with this, which was a stumbling-block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks, that he valued the knowledge of nothing else in comparison of the knowledge of Christ and him crucified. Nay he elsewhere saith, God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of Christ. What now should be the reason that they should rejoyce in that most which was most despicable to the world,

1 Cor. 2. 2.
Phil. 3. 8.
Gal. 6. 14.

world, had not they seen far greater truth and excellency in it, than in the most sublime speculations concerning God or the souls of men in the School of Plato or any other Heathen Philosophers? That all men should be bound in order to their salvation, to believe in one who was crucified at Hierusalem, was a strange doctrine to the unbelieving world: but if the Apostles had but endeavoured to have suited their doctrine to the School of Plato, what rare persons might they have been accounted among the Heathen Philosophers! Had they only in general terms discoursed of the Benignity of the Divine nature, and the manifestations of Divine goodness in the world, and that, in order to the bringing of the souls of men to a nearer participation of the Divine nature, the perfect Idea of true goodness, and the express image of the person of God, and the resplendency of his glory had veiled himself in humane nature, and had every where scattered such beams of light and goodness, as warmed and invigorated the frozen spirits of men with higher sentiments of God and themselves, and raised them up above the feculency of this terrestrial matter to breath in a freer air, and converse with more noble objects, and by degrees to fit the souls of men for those more pure illapses of real goodness, which might always satisfy the souls desires, and yet always keep them up till the soul should be sunning it self to all eternity under the immediate beams of Light and Love: And that after this Incarnate Deity had spread abroad the wings of his Love for a while upon this lower world, till by his gentle heat and incubation he had quickned the more plyable world to some degree of a Divine Life, he then retreated himself back again into the superior world, and put off that vail by which he made himself known to those who are here confined to the prisons of their bodies: Thus, I say, had the Apostles minded applause among the admired Philosophers of the Heathens, how easie had it been for them to have made some considerable additions to their highest speculations, and have left out any thing which might seem so mean and contemptible as the death of the Son of God! But this they were so far from, that the main thing which they preached to the world, was, the vanity of humane wisdom without Christ, and the

necessity of all mens believing in that Jesus who was crucified at Hierusalem.

The *Apostles* indeed discover very much, infinitely more than ever the most lofty *Platonist* could do, concerning the goodness and Love of God to mankind; but that wherein they manifested the Love of God to the world, was that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. And that herein was the Love of God manifested, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And that this was the greatest truth and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. They never dreamt of any divine goodness which should make men happy without Christ: No, it was their design to persuade the world that all the communications of Gods goodness to the world were wholly in and through Jesus Christ; and it is impossible that any should think otherwise, unless Plato knew more of the mind of God than our blessed Saviour, and Plotinus than Saint Paul. Can we think now that the *Apostles* should hazard the reputation of their own wits so much as they did to the world, and be accounted babblers, and fools, and madmen, for preaching the way of salvation to be only by a person crucified between two thieves at Hierusalem, had they not been convinced not only of the truth but importance of it, and that it concerned men as much to believe it, as it did to avoid eternal misery? Did Saint Paul preach ever the less the words of truth and soberness, because he was told to his face that his Learning had made him mad? But if he was besides himself, it was for Christ; and what wonder was it if the Love of Christ in the *Apostle* should make him willing to lose his reputation for him, seeing Christ made himself of no reputation, that he might be in a capacity to do us good? We see the *Apostles* were not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, because they knew it was the power of God to Salvation, and therefore neither in their preaching or their writings would they omit any of those passages concerning our Saviours death, which might be accounted the most dishonourable to his person. Which is certainly as great an evidence of their fidelity as can be expected; which makes Origen say that the Disciples of Christ writ all things.

things φιλαλήδως ἢ ἐυκωμόνως with a great deal of candor and love of truth. L. 3. c. cels.
 ἔκ θεκλέσαντες τῆς περὶ αὐτοῦ παραδεδεγμένης ἱστορίας τὸ
 δεκνῆν τοῖς πολλοῖς αἰσχύνῃ καὶ λόγῳ τῶν χειριστῶν φέρειν, not con-
 cealing from the world those passages of the life of Christ, which
 would be accounted most foolish and ridiculous.

2. With the greatest plainness and simplicity of speech. Such whose design is to impose upon the minds of men with some cunningly devised fables, love as much ambiguity as ever Apollo did in his most winding oracles, of whom it is said,

*Ambage nexa Delphico mos est Deo
 Arcana tegere.*

Servius tells us, that Jupiter Ammon was therefore pictured in 4. *Æneid.* with Rams-horns, because his answers had as many turnings and windings as they had. But the horns which Moses was wont to be pictured with, did only note light and perspicuity (from the ambiguity of קֶרֶן which notes the sending forth of rayes of light like a horn) and yet Moses himself was veiled in comparison of the openness and plainness of speech which was in the Apostles. Impostors cast a mist of many dark and cloudy words before them, but when they are once brought into the open light, their vizard falls off, and their deformity appears. Such persons delight in soaring quite out of the apprehensions of those who follow them, and never think themselves better recompensed for their pains, than when they are most admired and least understood. But never was Christianity more dishonoured, than when men brought it from its native simplicity and plainness, into a company of cloudy and insignificant expressions, which are so far from making men better understand the truth of it, that it was certainly the Devils design by such obscure terms to make way for a mysterie to be advanced (but it was of iniquity) and soon after, we see the effect of it in another oracle set up at Rome instead of Delphos; and all the pretence of it, was the obscurity supposed in Scripture. What! darkness come by the rising of the Sun! Or is the Sun at last grown so beggarly that he is fain to borrow light of the earth? Must

the *Scripture* be beholding to the *Church* for its clearness, and *Christ* himself not speak intelligibly, unless the *Pope* be his *Interpreter*? Did *Christ* reveal to the world the way to *salvation*, and yet leave men to seek which was it, till a *Guide* never heard of in the *Scripture* come to direct them in the way to it? What strange witnesses were the *Apostles*, if they did not speak the truth with plainness? How had men been to seek as to the truth of *Christianity*, if the *Apostles* had not declared the doctrine of the *Gospel* with all evidence and perspicuity? Whom must we believe in this case, the *Apostles* or the *Roman Oracle*? The *Apostles* they tell us they speak with all plainness of speech, and for that end purposely lay aside all excellency of words and humane wisdom, that men might not be to seek for their meaning in a matter of so great moment; that the *Gospel* was hid to none but such as are lost, and whose eyes are blinded by the god of this world; that the doctrine revealed by them is a light to direct us in our way to *Heaven*, and a rule to walk by; and it is a strange property of light to be obscure, and of a rule to be crooked. But it is not only evident from the *Apostles* own affirmations, that they laid aside all affected obscurity, ambiguous expressions, and Philosophical terms, whereby the world might have been to seek for what they were to believe, but it is likewise clear from the very nature of the doctrine they preached, and the design of their preaching of it. What need *Rhetorick* in plain truths? or affected phrases in giving evidence? How incongruous would obscure expressions have been to the design of saving souls by the foolishness of preaching? For if they had industriously spoken in their preaching, above the capacities of those they spake to, they could never have converted a soul without a miracle; for the ordinary way of conversion must be by the understanding; and how could that work upon the understanding, which was so much above it? But saith the *Apostle*, we preach not our selves, but *Christ Jesus the Lord*, and our selves your servants for *Jesus sake*. If they had sought themselves or their own credit and reputation, there might have been some reason that they should have used the way of the *Sophists* among the *Greeks*, and by declamatory speeches to have enhanced their esteem among the vulgar. But the

2 Cor. 3. 12.

1 Cor. 2. 1. 4.

1 Cor. 4. 3. 4.

2 Cor. 4. 5.

the *Apostles* disowned and rejected all these vulgar artifices of mean and low spirited men; they laid aside all those enticing words ἀρεσκοντες οφθαλμοῖς of the way of the Heathen Sophists, and declared the Testimony of God with spiritual evidence; 1 Cor. 2. 4. they handled not the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commended themselves to every mans conscience in the sight of God: Now what could be so sustainable to such a design, as the greatest plainness and faithfulness in what they spake? We find in the testimony of the *Apo-* 2 Cor. 4. 2. *stles* ἡ δὲ δύναμις καὶ κράτος καὶ πλεονεξία καὶ παύσις, as *Ori-* Orig. c. Cels. l. 3. p. 135. *gen* speaks, nothing that is spurious or counterfeit, nothing favouring of the cunning craftiness of such as lie in wait to deceive; and, saith he, it is impossible to think that men never bred up in the Sophistry of the Greeks, nor experienced in the Rhetorical insinuations used among them, could ever be able so suddenly to persuade the world to embrace that which had been a figment of their own brains. The truth is, the *Apostles* speak like men very confident of the truth of what they speak, and not like such who were fain to fetch in the help of all their Topicks, to find out some probable arguments to make men believe that which it is probable they did not believe themselves, which was most commonly the case of the great Orators among the Heathens. We find no pedantick flourishes, no flattering insinuations, no affected cadencies, no such great care of the rising and falling of words in the several sentences, which make up so great a part of that which was accounted eloquence in the *Apostles* times. These things were too mean a prey for the spirits of the *Apostles* to quarry upon; every thing in them was grave and serious, every word had its due weight, every sentence brimful of spiritual matter, their whole discourse most becoming the Majesty and Authority of that spirit which they spake by. And therein was seen a great part of the infinite wisdom of God in the choice he made of the persons who were to propagate the Doctrine of Christ in the world, that they were not such who by reason of their great repute and fame in the world, might easily draw whole multitudes to embrace their dictates, but (that there might not be the least foundation for an implicate faith) they were of so mean rank and condition in the world, that in all probability

c. cels. l. 3.

probability their names had never been heard of, had not their doctrine made them famous. To this purpose Origen excellently speaks, ὁμοῖον ἔστι τῷ βεβηλωμένῳ διδασκάλῳ τῷ δόξματι τοῦ ἡρώδου ἵνα μηδεμίαν αὐτῷ ἔχη χάριν ἁπλοῦς πεινῶν σορισμάτων λαμπρῶς ὅτι τοῖς συνιέναι δυναμῶς ἐμφάνη, ὅτι τὸ ἀδελφὸν τῆς περαιοσύνης, ἢ γρηφάντων, ἐχούσης πολὺ τὸ ἀρελές, ἡξιάθη θεϊότερας δυνάμεις, πολλὰ μᾶλλον ἀνύσους, ἢ περ ἀνύειν δυνατὸς δοκεῖ παρβολὴ λόγων, καὶ λέξων σύνθεσις, καὶ μετὰ διαφύσεων καὶ τεχνολογίας Ἑλληνικῆς ἀκολοθία. I am of opinion, saith he, that Jesus did purposely make use of such Preachers of his doctrine, that there might be no place for suspicion that they came instructed with the arts of Sophistry; but that it be clearly manifest to all that would consider it, that there was nothing of design in those who discovered so much simplicity in their writings, and that they had a more divine power which was more efficacious than the greatest volubility of expressions, or ornaments of speech, or the artifices which were used in the Grecian compositions.

2 Cor. 6. 8.

3. The Apostles delivered the doctrine with the greatest openness and freedom of spirit; they did not give out one thing to the world, and another to their private Disciples; but with great freedom and boldness declared their doctrine in the most publick places, and before their greatest enemies. They knew they were looked on as deceivers by the world, but yet they knew themselves to be true, ὡς πλανοὶ καὶ ἀληθεῖς. This is the usual requital good men have from the world, that they are looked on as the greatest deceivers of it; if it be so with others, they have much less cause to wonder at it, when even he, who by one Prophet is stiled the desire of nations, is by another said to be despised and rejected of men; and when Christ was in the world, he was called ὁ πλανῶν, the deceiver; no wonder then if his Disciples were accounted such, although they manifested their veracity by their open carriage and free speaking to the faces of their greatest adversaries. The Apostles neither feared the Jews skill in their Law, nor the wisdom and subtilty of the Greeks: Saint Paul preacheth Christ openly among the Jews in their Synagogues, and among the Athenians he encounters the Epicureans and Stoicks, and preacheth to them Jesus and the resurrection.

Hag. 2. 7.
Isa. 52. 3.
Mat. 27. 63.

Act. 17. 18.

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If the *Apostles* had any thing of *deceivers* in them, as to the things they related concerning *Christ*, they would not certainly have spoken with so much confidence concerning *Christ* in the presence of those who had been his murderers; but we see they appealed to themselves, as to the miracles which he had wrought among them, and for his resurrection they were ready to lay down their lives in giving testimony to the truth of it. That his body was gone, was evident; that the *Apostles* should take it away was impossible, considering what a guard of soldiers they had set upon it, and how timorous and fearful the *Apostles* were, that they fled upon *Christ's* being apprehended. Now what could it be, could make such fearful persons afterwards so courageous and resolute as they were, had there not been some more than ordinary power to convince and encourage them?

4. The *Apostles* deliver their Testimony with the greatest particularity as to all circumstances. They do not change or alter any of them upon different examinations before several persons; they all agree in the greatest constancy to themselves and uniformity with each other. As to matters of indifference, we find the *Apostles* very yielding and condescending; but as to any thing which concerned their testimony, most constant and resolved. Had the Gospel been some cunningly contrived fancy, it had been impossible but so many different persons, in such different places, and under such different conditions, would have varied as to some material circumstance of it: Or else they would have been so wise as to have delivered it in general terms, without insisting much on such particular circumstances, which if they had been false, might have been very easily disproved; but with what particular enumeration of circumstances do the *Apostles* preach *Christ* to the world? *Peter* tells the *Jews* that it was *Jesus* A. 2. 22. of *Nazareth* whom he preached; and lest they should think it was not the same person who rose again, with great boldness and freedom of spirit he saith to them, *Therefore let all the* 2. 36. *house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Yea that same individual person who was conversant in the world, and dyed upon the Cross, is now become a Prince and Saviour to* 5. 31, 32.

give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. If there had been any ground of suspicion as to these things, who had been so able to disprove them, or so ready to do it, as those persons who had crucified him? For we cannot conceive but those who had a hand in his death, would endeavour by all possible means to disprove his resurrection from the dead. For what a case were they like to be in, if those things which the Apostles so confidently preached were true? If Christ had all power now in his hands, and there were salvation in no other name, but only in his whom they had crucified, they were like to be in a most desperate condition; therefore if any men can be supposed inquisitive after the truth of these circumstances, no doubt these were: And if they could have found the least flaw in their testimony, the world would soon have ringed of it; and the Jews who were then so much dispersed abroad, would have divulged it into all parts, the Apostles would have been told of it as they preached Christ in the Synagogues. And can we in any reason think, but those Jews who persecuted Paul as he Preached in the Synagogues of Asia, and afterwards impeached him so openly at Jerusalem, would there enquire into all the circumstances concerning Christ, and all the other Jews would write to their Friends at Jerusalem to be fully informed of those strange things which were told them openly in all places in their Synagogues by men of their own Nation and language, concerning one Jesus who was crucified and rose again from the dead.? Had there been now any so much as plausible pretext that any of these circumstances were not true, can we think but that a people so unmeasurably given to their own ways and traditions, would in all places have vented any thing that might have tended to the disparagement of Christ and his Apostles? But we see malice it self could not find any flaw in the Apostles testimony; for if it had, we should certainly have heard of it, either from the Jews, or from the great opposers of Christianity among the Heathens, who pretended to be curious and inquisitive persons, such as Celsus, Julian, Hierocles and Porphyrie were. What reason can we have then in the least to suspect such a Testimony which passed so uncontrouled in that time when it was alone capable of being
disproved,

disproved, and mens interest and design would put them so much upon it? The strength of which will appear from the next proposition, which is,

No Testimony ought to be taken against a matter of fact thus attested, but from such persons who had greater knowledge of the things attested, and manifest greater fidelity in reporting them. It is easie to make it appear, that supposing any persons at that time had contradicted the Testimony of the Apostles concerning our Saviour, yet there had been no reason in the world to have hearkened to their Testimony in opposition to that of the Apostles; and that on these accounts.

1. *The Apostles witnessed the Affirmative, which is more capable of being attested than any negative can be.* 2. *The Apostles were more conversant with Christ than any other persons were, because they were chosen for that very end by him to be constantly with him: could any therefore be more capable of knowing the truth of all particulars concerning Christ than these were? Had there been any ground of suspicion concerning the design of Christ, why could not the Jews prevail with Judas to discover it as well as to betray his person? Judas had done but a good work if Christ had been such an impostor as the Jews blasphemously said he was: what made Judas then so little satisfied with his work, that he grew weary of his life upon it, and threw himself away in the most horrid despair? No person certainly had been so fit to have been produced as a witness against Christ, as Judas who had been so long with him, and had heard his speeches and observed his miracles; but he had not patience enough to stay after that horrid fact to be a witness against him: nay he was the greatest witness at that time for him, when he who had betrayed him came to the Sanhedrin when consulting about his death, and told them that he had sinned in betraying innocent blood. What possible evidence could have been given more in behalf of our Saviour than that was? When a person so covetous as to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver, was so weary of his bargain that he comes and throws back the money, and declares the person innocent whom he had betrayed? And this person too was such a one as knew our Saviour far better than any of the*

*Scct. 17.
Prop. 4.*

Mat. 27. 5.

witnesses whom afterwards they suborned against him, who yet contradicted each other ; and at last could produce nothing which in the judgement of the Heathen Governour could make him judge Christ worthy of death. 3. The Apostles were freer from design than any counter-witness at that time could be ; we have already proved the Apostles could not possibly, have any other motive to affirm what they did, but full conviction of the truth of what they spake ; but now if any among the Jews at that time had asserted any thing contrary to the Apostles, we have a clear account of it, and what motive might induce them to it ; viz. the preserving of their honour and reputation with the people, the upholding their traditions, besides their open and declared enmity against Christ without any sufficient reason at all for it ; now who would believe the testimony of the Scribes and Pharisees who had so great authority among the people, which they were like to lose, if Christs doctrine were true, before that of the Apostles who parted with all for the sake of Christ, and ventured themselves wholly upon the truth of our Saviours doctrine ? 4. None ever did so much to attest the negative, as the Apostles did to prove their fidelity as to the affirmative. Had sufficient counter-witness been timely produced, we cannot think the Apostles would have run so many continual hazards, in Preaching the things which related to the person and actions of Christ. Did ever any lay down their lives to undeceive the world if the Apostles were guilty of abusing it ? 5. The number of such persons had been inconsiderable in comparison of those who were so fully perswaded of the truth of those things which concern our Saviour ; who were all ready (as most of them did) to seal the truth of them with their lives. Whence should so many men grow so suddenly confident of the truth of such things which were contrary to their former perswasions, interest, education, had they not been delivered in such a way, that they were assured of the undoubted truth of them ? which brings me to the last proposition, which is,

Seet. 18.

Prop. 5.

Matters of fact being first believed on the account of eye-witnesses, and received with an universal and uncontrouled assent by all such persons who have thought themselves concern-

ed.

ed in knowing the truth of them, do yield a sufficient foundation for a firm assent to be built upon. I take it for granted that there is sufficient foundation for a firm assent, where there can be no reason given to question the evidence; which that there is not in this present case, will appear from these following considerations.

1. That the multitudes of those persons who did believe these things, had liberty and opportunity to be satisfied of the truth of them before they believed them. Therefore no reason or motive can be assigned, on which they should be induced to believe these things, but the undoubted evidence of truth which went along with them. I confess in Mahometism a very great number of persons have for some centuries of years continued in the belief of the doctrine of Mahomet; but then withal there is a sufficient account to be given of that, viz. the power of the sword which keeps them in awe, and strictly forbids all the followers of Mahomet to dispute their religion at all, or compare it with any other. Therefore I can no more wonder at this, than I do to see so great a part of the world under the Tyranny of the great Turk; Neither on the other side do I wonder that such a multitude of those professing Christianity should together with it, believe a great number of erroneous doctrines, and live in the practice of many gross superstitions, because I consider what a strange prevalency education hath upon softer spirits and more easie intellectuals, and what an awe an Inquisition bears upon timorous and irresolved persons. But now when a great multitude of persons sober and inquisitive, shall contrary to the principles of their education, and without fear of any humane force, (which they beforehand see will persecute them) and after diligent enquiry made into the grounds on which they believe, forsake all their former persuasions, and resolutely adhere to the truth of the doctrine propounded to them, though it cost them their lives; if this give us not reason to think this doctrine true, we must believe mankind to be the most unhappy creatures in the world; that will with so much resolution part with all advantages of this life for the sake of one to come, if that be not undoubtedly certain, and the doctrine proposing it infallibly true. It is an

1 Cor. 2. 5.
1 Cor. 1. 27.

Dialog. cum
Tryph. p. 125.
ed. Par.

observable circumstance in the propagation of Christian Religion, that though God made choice at first of persons generally of mean rank and condition in the world to be Preachers of the Gospel, God thereby making it appear that our faith did not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God, and therefore chose the weak things of the world to confound the strong; yet soon after the Gospel was preached abroad in the world, we find persons of great place and reputation, of great parts and abilities engaged in the profession of the Christian Faith. In the History of the Acts we read of Sergius a Proconsul, of Dionysius the Arcopagite converted to the faith, and in the following ages of the Church many persons of great esteem for their excellent learning and abilities; such as Justin Martyr, one who before he became a Christian, was conversant with all Sects of Philosophers, Stoicks, Peripateticks, Pythagoreans, and at last was a professed Platonist till he was converted from Plato to Christ, and then found that true which he speaks of in his Dialogue with Trypho, that after all his enquiries into Philosophy, speaking of the Doctrine of Christ ταύτῳ μόνῳ εὐεισκον φιλοσοφίαν ἀσφαλῆ τε καὶ σύμφορον, I found this at last to be the only sure and profitable Philosophy. And when Trypho after derides him as a man of very easie faith, who would leave the doctrine of Plato for that of Christ, (for it seems by him the Jews then had a more favourable opinion of the state of Platonists than Christians) Justin is so far from being moved with such reproaches, that he tells him he would undertake to demonstrate to him ὅτι ἡ κατ' οὐκ ἐπιστάσασθαι μὴ μύθοις, δὲ ἀναποδείκνυσθαι λόγῳ, ἀλλὰ μετ' οὐκ ἐπιδείκνυσθαι καὶ ἀνὰ μὲν βρύσσει, καὶ τεθληδὸς χέει: that the Christians did not give credit to empty fables, and unprovable assertions, but to such a doctrine as was full of a Divine spirit and power, and flourished with grace: The proving of which is the subject of that discourse. At Alexandria we meet with a succession of excellent persons, all which were not only embracers themselves, but defenders of the Christian faith; for setting aside their Abilius, Justin, Cerdo, Eumenes, Marcus, Celadion, Agrippinus, Julianus, Demetrius and others who flourished about the second Century, I shall only fix on those persons, who were famous enquirers

enquirers after truth, and noted for excellency in *Heathen learning*; yet these persons after all their enquiries found nothing to fix on but the *Christian faith*, and valued no other discovery of truth in comparison with that. Such was *Pantænus*, who as *Eusebius* tells us, was an excellent *Stoick* before he became a *Christian*, and was after so eminent a one, that in imitation of the *Apostles* he went into *India* to convert the inhabitants to the *Christian faith*, and at his return was made *Rector* of the *School* at *Alexandria*; which as the same *Author* tells us, was much frequented by such who were εν λογῇ καὶ τῇ θεῇ τὰ θεῖα Γνωστὴ δύναται, well skilled in humane as well as *Divine learning*. How excellent *Pantænus* was in humane learning, may appear in that *Origen* and *Hierome* both make his example their plea for the studying of it. After him succeeded *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Pantænus* his Scholar, a person of great depth of learning and exquisitely skilled in all *Heathen Antiquities*, as appears by his remaining writings. The *Learning* of *Origen* is sufficiently known, which was in such great reputation in his own time, that not only *Christians* but *Philosophers* flocked to his *Lectures* at *Alexandria* as *Eusebius* tells us, wherein he read the *Mathematicks*, and other parts of *Philosophy* as well as the *Scriptures*; and the same *Author* informs us that the *Philosophers* did dedicate their books to him, and sometimes chose him as arbitrator between them in matters of dispute; and *Porphyrus* himself in his books against the *Christians* vouchsafed a high encomium of *Origen* for his excellent learning. In *Origen's* time *Heraclas* a *Presbyter* of *Alexandria* for five years together frequented the *Schools* of the *Philosophers*, and put on the *Philosophick* pallium, βιβλία τε ἑλλήνων καὶ κατὰ δύναμιν ἐπαύσαι φιλοσόφων, and was very conversant in the books of the *Grecian Learning*. Besides these we read of *Pierius* and *Achillas* two *Presbyters* of *Alexandria* who were τῇ καὶ ἑλλήνων παιδείᾳ καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ δεδουκασμένοι as *Nicephorus Callistus* speaks, persons well skilled in the *Grecian learning* and *Philosophy*. If from *Alexandria* we go to *Cæsarea*, there we not only meet with a *School* of learning among the *Christians*, but with persons very eminent in all kinds of learning; such were the famous *Pamphilus*, and *Eusebius* so great an admirer of him, that

Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 10.

Eus. l. 6. c. 20.

Hist. l. 6. c. 18.

Eus. l. 6. c. 20.

Hist. Eccles. l. 6. c. 35.

ever.

Lib. 6. c. 35.

ever since he is called *Eusebius Pamphili*. At *Antioch* was *Dorotheus* ἀνὴρ παντοίων λόγων καὶ παιδείας ἐλευθερὸς, as *Nicephorus* speaks, a person versed in all kind of ingenious literature.

Lib. 6. c. 36.

Anatolius Bishop of *Laodicea*, one versed in *Geometry*, *Astronomy*, and all kind of *Philosophy* as well as in the doctrine of *Christ*. Thus we see how in those early days of the *Greek Church* what excellent persons many of those were who were zealous Professors of *Christianity*; and concerning those of the *Latin Church*, I shall only mention that speech of *St. Austin* who was himself an instance of the same nature and

Aug. de doctr.
Christiana. l. 2.
cap. 40.

a star of the first magnitude among them. *Nonne aspicimus quanto auro & argento & veste suffarcinatus exierit de Aegypto Cyprianus Doctor suavissimus & Martyr beatissimus? quanto Lactantius? quanto Victorinus, Optatus, Hilarius? ut de vivis taceam: quanto innumerabiles Graeci? quod prior ipse fidelissimus Dei servus Moses fecerat, de quo scriptum est, quod eruditus fuerit omni sapientia Aegyptiorum.* To whose catalogue of learned persons, among the *Latin Christians* *Tertullian*, *Arnobius* and several others may be deservedly added. But as *St. Austin* there well observes, though the *Israelites* went rich out of *Aegypt*, yet it was their eating the *Passover* which saved them from destruction; so though these were accomplished with those perfections and riches of the soul, the ornaments of learning, yet it was their eating the true *Passover* which was *Christ*, by their adhering to his doctrine, was that which would be of more advantage to them, than all their accomplishments would be. Now then since in the first ages of the *Christian Church*, we find not only innumerable multitudes of persons of great integrity and sobriety in their lives embracing the doctrine of *Christ*, but so many persons that were curious enquirers after the truth of things, we can certainly have no reason to distrust such a Testimony which was received in so unanimous a manner by persons as able to judge of the truth of things, and as fearful of being deceived in reference to them, as any now in the world can be.

St. B. 19.

2. As this testimony was received by persons inquisitive after the truth of things, so the doctrine conveyed by it was a matter of the highest moment in the world: and therefore we cannot

cannot conceive but *persons ordinarily inquisitive* about other *things* would be more than *ordinarily so* about this, because their *eternal welfare and happiness* did depend upon it. All *persons* that are truly *religious*, must at least be *allowed* to be *persons very inquisitive* after the *state and condition* of their *souls* when they shall be *dislodged* from their *bodies*. And if we do but grant *this*, can we in any *reason* think that such a *multitude of persons* in so many *ages* should continue venturing their *souls* upon a *Testimony* which they had no *assurance* of the *truth* of? And that *none* of all these *persons* though men otherwise *rational and judicious*, should be *able* to *discover* the *falsity* of that *doctrine* they went upon, if at least any upon *consideration* of it can *imagine* it to be so? It is not *reconcilable* with the general *presumption* of *humane nature* concerning *Divine providence* and the *care* God takes of the *welfare* of men, to suffer so many *persons* who *sincerely* desire to *serve* God in the way which is most *pleasing* to him, to go on in such a *continual delusion*, and never have it at all *discovered* to them? If all then who have believed the *doctrine* of *Christ* to be the only way to *salvation* have been *deceived*, either we must *deny* altogether a *Divine Providence*, or say the *Devil* hath more power to *deceive* men than God to *direct* them, which is *worse* than the *former*, or else assert that there are no such *things* at all as either *God* or *Devils*, but that all *things* come to *pass* by *chance* and *fortune*; and if so, it is still more *inexplicable* why such *multitudes* of *rational* and *serious* men, and the most *inquisitive* part of the *world* as to such *things*, should all be so *possessed* with the *truth* and *certainty* of these *things*: and the more *profane*, *wicked* and *ignorant* any *persons* are, the more prone they are to *mock* and *deride* them. If such men then see more into *truth* and *reason* than the *sober* and *judicious* part of *mankind*, let us bid adieu to *humanity* and adore the *brutes*, since we admire their *judgement* most who come the *nearest* to them.

3. The *multitude* of these *persons* thus *consenting* in this *Testimony*, could have no other *engagements* to this *consent*, but only their *firm persuasion* of the *truth* of the *doctrine* conveyed by it; because those who *unanimously* agree in this *thing* are such *persons* whose other *designs* and *interests* in this *world*,

differ as much as any *mens* do. If it had been only a *consent* of *Jews*, there might have been some *probable pretence* to have *suspected* a matter of *interest* in it; but as to this *thing*, we find the *Jews* divided among *themselves* about it; and the stiffest *deniers* of the *truth* of it, do yet *inviolably* preserve those *sacred records* among them, from which the *truth* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* may be undoubtedly proved. Had the *Christian Religion* been enforced upon the *world* by the *Roman Emperors* at the time of its first promulgation, there would have been some *suspicion* of particular design in it; but it came with no other strength but the evidence of its own *truth*; yet it found *sudden* and *strange* entertainment among persons of all *Nations* and *degrees* of men. In a short time it had eaten into the heart of the *Roman Empire*, and made so large a spread therein, that it made *Tertullian* say,

Apol. cap. 36.

Hesterni sumus, & vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, palatium, senatum, forum; sola vobis relinquimus Tempia. We have but newly appeared, saith he, and yet we have filled all places with our company, but only your Temples; and before speaking of the Heathens, Obsessam vociferantur civitatem, in agris, in Castellis, in insulis Christianos, omnem sexum, aetatem, conditionem, etiam dignitatem transgredi ad hoc nomen quasi detrimento mœrent.

Apol. c. 1.

All sorts and conditions of men in all places, were suddenly became Christians. What common tie could there be now to unite all these persons together, if we set aside the undoubted truth and certainty of the doctrine of Christ which was first preached to them by such who were eye-witnesses of Christ's actions, and had left sacred records behind them, containing the substance of the doctrine of Christ and those admirable instructions which were their only certain guides in the way to Heaven?

4. Because many persons do joyn in this consent with true Christians, who yet could heartily wish that the doctrine of Christianity were not true. Such are all those persons who are sensual in their lives, and walk not according to the rules of the Gospel, yet dare not question or deny the truth of it. Such who could heartily wish there were no future state, nor judgement to come, that they might indulge themselves in this

this world without fear of another ; yet their consciences are so far convinced of , and awed by the truth of these things, that they raise many perplexities and anxieties in their minds which they would most willingly be rid of ; which they can never thoroughly be, till instead of having the name of Christians, they come to live the life of Christians, and become experimentally acquainted with the truth and power of Religion. And withal we find that the more men have been acquainted with the practice of Christianity, the greater evidence they have had of the truth of it, and been more fully and rationally perswaded of it. To such I grant there are such powerful evidences of the truth of the doctrine of Christ by the effectual workings of the Spirit of God upon their souls, that all other arguments, as to their own satisfaction, may fall short of these. As to which, those verses of the Poet Dantes, rendred into Latine by F. S. are very pertinent and significant ; for when he had introduced the Apostle Peter asking him what it was which his faith was founded on, he answers.

*Deinde exivit ex luce profunda
Quæ illic splendebat pretiosa gemma
Super quam omnis virtus fundatur.*

i. e. That God was pleased by immediate revelation of himself, to discover that divine truth to the world whereon our faith doth stand as on its sure foundation ; but when the Apostle goes on to enquire how he knew this came at first from God, his answer to that is,

————— *larga pluvia*
Spiritus Sancti, quæ est diffusa
Super veteres & super novas membranas,
Est syllogismus ille qui eam mihi conclusit
Adæo acutè, ut præ illâ demonstratione
Omnis demonstratio alia mihi videatur obtusa.

i. e. That the Spirit of God doth so fully discover it self both in the Old and New Testament, that all other arguments are

but dull and heavy if compared with this. It is true they are so to a truly inlightned conscience which discovers so much beauty and glory in the Scriptures, that they ravish the soul, although it be unable to give so full an account of this unto other who want the eyes to see that beauty with, which a heart truly gracious hath. We see ordinarily in the world, that the attraction of beauty is an unaccountable thing; and one may discern that which ravisheth him, which another looks on as mean and ordinary; and why may it not be much more thus in divine objects which want spiritual eyes to discover them? Therefore I grant that good men enjoy that satisfaction to their own Consciences, as to the truth of that Doctrine of Christ, which others cannot attain to; but yet I say, that such do likewise see the most strong, rational and convincing evidence which doth induce them to believe; which evidence is then most convincing, when it is seconded by the peculiar energy of the Spirit of God upon the souls of true Believers. But yet we see that the power and force of the truth of these things may be so great, even upon such minds which are not yet moulded into the fashion of true goodness, that it may awe with its light and clearness, where it doth not soften and alter by its heat and influence. Now whence can it be that such convictions should stick so fast in the minds of those who would fain pull out those piercing arrows, but that there is a greater power in them than they are masters of, and they cannot stand against the force whereby they come upon them; nor find any salve to cure the wounds which are made within them, but by those weapons which were the causes of them? And therefore when wicked persons under conflicts of conscience, cannot ease themselves by direct Atheism, or finding reason to cast off such convictions by discerning any invalidity in the Testimony whereon the truth of these things depends, it is a certain argument that there is abundant truth in that Testimony, when men would fain persuade themselves to believe the contrary, and yet cannot.

5. The truth of this consent appears, from the unanimity of it among those persons who have yet strangely differed from each other in many controversies in Religion. We see thereby this unanimity is no forced or designed thing, because we see the

the persons agreeing in this, do very much disagree from each other in other things. And the same grounds and reasons whereon they disagree as to other things, would have held as to these too, were there not greater evidence of the certainty of these things than of those they fall out about. It had not yet become a question among those who differ so much about the sense of Scripture, whether the Scripture itself be the Word of God, although the very accounts on which we are to believe it to be so, hath been the subject of no mean Controversies. All the divided parts of the Christian world do yet fully agree in the matters of fact, viz. that there was such a person as Jesus Christ, and that he did many great miracles, that he died on the Cross at Jerusalem, and rose again from the dead; now these contain the great foundations of Christian faith; and therefore the multitude of other controversies in the world ought to be so far from weakening our faith, as to the truth of the doctrine of Christ (which men of weak judgements and Atheistical spirits pretend) that it ought to be a strong confirmation of it, when we see persons which so peevishly quarrel with each other about some inferior and less weighty parts of Religion, do yet unanimously consent in the principal foundations of Christian faith, and such whereon the necessity of faith and obedience, as the way to salvation, doth more immediately depend. And this may be one great reason why the infinitely wise God may suffer such lamentable contentions and divisions to be in the Christian world, that thereby inquisitive persons may see that if Religion had been a meer design of some few politick persons, the quarrelsome world (where it is not held in by force) would never have consented so long in the owning such common principles which all the other controversies are built upon. And although it be continually seen that in divided parties, one is apt to run from any thing which is received by the other, and men generally think they can never run far enough from them whose errors they have discovered, that yet this principle hath not carryed any considerable party of the Christian world (out of their indignation against those great corruptions which have crept into the world under a pretence of Religion) to the disowning the foundation of

Christian Faith, must be partly *imputed* to the *signal hand* of *divine providence*, and partly to those *strong evidences* which there are of the *truth* of that *Testimony* which *conveyes* to us the *foundations* of *Christian Faith*. Thus we see now how *great* and *uncontrouled* this *consent* is, as to the *matters* of *fact* delivered down from the *eye-witnesses* of them, concerning the *actions* and *miracles* of our *blessed Saviour* (which are contained in the *Scriptures* as *authentic* records of them) and what a *sure foundation* there is for a *firm assent* to the *truth* of the *things* from so *universal* and *uninterrupted* a *tradition*.

Sett. 20.

Thus far we have now manifested the *necessity* of the *miracles* of *Christ*, in order to the *propagation* of *Christianity* in the world, from the consideration of the *persons* who were to *propagate* it in the world; the *next thing* we are to consider, is, the *admirable success* which the *Gospel* met with in the world upon its being *preached* to it: Of which no *rational account* can be given, unless the *actions* and *miracles* of our *Saviour* were most *undoubtedly true*. That the *Gospel* of *Christ* had very *strange* and *wonderful success* upon its first *preaching*, hath been partly *discovered* already, and is withal so *plain* from the long *continuance* of it in these *European* parts, that none any ways *conversant* in the *history* of former *ages*, can have any ground to *question* it. But that this *strange* and *admirable success* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* should be an *evidence* of the *Truth* of it, and the *miracles* wrought in *confirmation* of it, will appear from these two considerations. 1. That the *doctrine* it self was so *directly contrary* to the *general inclinations* of the world. 2. That the *propagation* of it was so much *opposed* by all *worldly power*.

1. That the *doctrine* it self was so *opposite* to the *general inclinations* of the world. The *doctrine* may be considered either as to its *credenda*, or *matters of faith*, or as to its *agenda*, or *matters of life and practice*; both these were *contrary* to the *inclinations* of the world; the former seemed *hard* and *incredible*, the latter *harsh* and *impossible*.

1. The *matters of faith* which were to be believed by the world, were not such *things* which we may imagine the
vulgar

vulgar sort of men would be very forward to run after, nor very greedy to imbrace. 1. *Because contrary to the principles of their education, and the Religion they were brought up in;* the generality of mankind is very *tenacious* of those principles and prejudices which are sucked in in the time of *Infancy*. There are some *Religions* one would think it were impossible that any rational men should believe them, but only on this account because they are bred up under them. It is a very great advantage any Religion hath against another, that it comes to speak first, and thereby insinuates such an apprehension of it self to the mind, that it is very hard removing it afterwards. The understanding seems to be of the nature of those things which are *communis juris*, and therefore *primi sunt possidentis*; when an opinion hath once got possession of the mind, it usually keeps out whatever comes to disturb it. Now we cannot otherwise conceive but all those persons who had been bred up under *Paganism* and the most gross *Idolatry*, must needs have a very potent prejudice against such a doctrine which was wholly irreconcilable with that Religion which they had been devoted to. Now the stronger the prejudice is which is conveyed into mens minds by the force of education, the greater strength and power must there needs be in the Gospel of Christ, which did so easily demolish these strong holds, and captivate the understandings of men to the obedience of Christ. To which purpose *Arnobius* excellently speaks in these words to the Heathens; *Sed non creditis gesta hæc. Sed qui ea conspicati sunt fieri & sub oculis suis viderunt agi, testes optimi certissimique auctores, & crediderunt hæc ipsi, & credenda posteris nobis haud exilibus cum approbationibus tradiderunt. Quinam isti fortasse queritis? gentes, populi, nationes & incredulum illud genus humanum. Quod nisi aperta res esset, & luce ipsa quemadmodum dicitur clarior, nunquam rebus hujusmodi credulitatis sue commodarent assensum. An nunquid dicemus, illius temporis homines usque adeo fuisse vanos, mendaces, stolidos, brutos, ut quæ nunquam viderant vidisse se fingerent? & quæ facta omnino non erant falsis proderent testimonii aut puerili assertione firmarent? Cumque possent vobiscum & unanimiter vivere, & inoffensas ducere conjunctiones, gratuita susciperent*

Arnob. c. gentes. l. 1.

odia:

odia & execrabili haberentur in nomine? Quod si falsa ut dicitis historia illa rerum est, unde tam brevi tempore totus mundus ista religione completus est? Aut in unam coire qui potuerunt mentem gentes regionibus dissita, ventis cœlique convexionibus dimota? Asseverationibus illecta sunt nudis, inducta in spes cassas, & in pericula capitis immittere se sponte temeraria desperatione voluerunt, cum nihil tale vidissent quod eas in hos cultus novitatis suae possit excitare miraculo? Imo quia haec omnia ab ipso cernebant geri & ab ejus praconibus qui per orbem totum missi beneficia patris & munera sanandis animis hominibusq; portabant, veritatis ipsius vi victa, & dederunt se Deo, nec in magnis posuere dispendiis membra vobis projicere, & viscera sua lanianda praeberē. The substance of whose discourse is, that it is impossible to suppose so many persons of so many Nations to be so far besotted and infatuated, as not only to believe a Religion to be true which was contrary to that they were educated in, but to venture their lives as well as estates upon it, had it not been discovered to them in a most certain and infallible way by such who had been eye-witnesses of the actions and miracles of Christ and his Apostles. And as he elsewhere speaks, *Vel hac saltem fidem vobis faciant argumenta credendi quod jam per omnes terras in tam brevi tempore & parvo immensi nominis hujus sacramenta diffusa sunt; quod nulla jam natio est tam barbari moris, & mansuetudinem nesciens, quae non ejus amore versa mollior sit asperitatem suam, & in placidos sensus assumptâ tranquillitate migraverit; quod tam magnis ingenii præditi Oratores, Grammatici, Rhetores, Consulti juris ac Medici, Philosophiae etiam secreta rimantes, magisteria haec expetunt, spretis quibus paulò ante fidebant, &c.* Will not this persuade the world what firm foundations the faith of Christians stands on, when in so short a time it is spread over all parts of the world? that by it the most inhumane and barbarous Nations are softened into more than civility? That men of the greatest wits and parts, Orators, Grammarians, Rhetoricians, Lawyers, Physicians, Philosophers, who not? have forsaken their former sentiments, and adhered to the doctrine of Christ. Now, I say, if the power of education be so strong upon the minds of men to persuade them of the truth of the Religion they

they are bred up under (which *Atheistically* disposed persons make so much advantage of) this is so far from weakening the truth of Christianity, that it proves a great confirmation of it, becaule it obtained so much upon its first Preaching in the world, notwithstanding the highest prejudices from education were against it. If then men be so prone to believe that to be most true, which they have been educated under, it must argue a more than ordinary evidence and power in that Religion which unsettles so much the principles of education, as to make men not only question the truth of them, but to renounce them, and embrace a Religion contrary to them.

Especially when we withall consider what strong-holds *Scæ. 21.* these principles of education were backed with among the Heathens, when the doctrine of Christ was first divulged among them, i. e. what plausible pretences they had of continuing in the religion which they were brought up in, and why they should not exchange it for Christianity; and those were,

1. The pretended antiquity of their religion above the Christian; the main thing pleaded against the Christians was *divortium ab institutis majorum*, that they thought themselves wiser than their fore-fathers; and Symmachus, Libanius, and others plead this most in behalf of Paganism; *servanda est tot seculis fides, & sequendi sunt nobis parentes qui secuti sunt feliciter suos*; their religion pleaded prescription against any other, and they were resolved to follow the steps of their Ancestors wherein they thought themselves happy and secure. *Cecilius in Minutius Felix* first argues much against dogmatizing in religion, but withal says it most becomes a lover of truth, *majorum excipere disciplinam, religiones traditas colere, deos quos à parentibus ante imbuus es timere; nec de numinibus ferre sententiam sed prioribus credere*. So *Arnobius* tells us the main thing objected against the Christians was *novellam esse religionem nostram, & ante dies natam propemodum paucos, neque vos potuisse antequam & patriam relinquere, & in barbaros ritus peregrinosque traduci*. And *Cotta* in *Tully* long before, laid this down as the main principle of Pagan religion, *majoribus nostris etiam nulla*

Textul. ad Not.
l. 1. cap. 10.
Symmach. ep. l.
10. ep. 61.
Liban. orat. de
Templis.

Minut. Felix.
p. 6.

Arnob. c. gent.
l. 2. pag. 90.

De nat. Deorum.
l. 3.

Lactant. de o-
rig. error. l. 2.
c. 6.

ratione reddita credere, to believe the tradition of our Fathers, although there be no evidence in reason for it: And after he had discovered the vanity of the Stoical arguments about Religion, concludes with this as the only thing he resolved his religion into, mihi unum satis erit, majores nostros ita tradidisse, It is enough for me that it comes by tradition from our fore-fathers. Lactantius fully sets forth the manner of pleading used by the Heathens against the Christians in the point of antiquity. Ha sunt religiones, quas sibi à majoribus suis traditas, pertinacissime tueri ac defendere perseverant; nec considerant quales sint, sed ex hoc probatas atque veras esse confidunt, quod eas veteres tradiderunt; tantaque est auctoritas vetustatis, ut inquirere in eam scelus esse dicatur. The English is, they accounted tradition infallible, and knew no other way whereby to find the truth of religion but by its conveyance from their fore-fathers. How like herein do they speak to those who contend for the corruptions crept into the Christian Church? who make use of the same pretences for them, viz. that they were delivered down from the Fathers; tantaque est auctoritas vetustatis, ut inquirere in eam scelus esse dicatur; who are we who will see further than Antiquity? But it is no wonder if Antiquity be accompanied with dimness of sight; and so it was undoubtedly as to the Pagan world; and as to the Christian too, when such a mixture of Heathenism came into it. And the very same arguments by which the pleaders for Christianity did justify the truth of their religion, notwithstanding this pretended antiquity, will with equal force hold for a reformation of such inveterate abuses, which under a pretence of antiquity, have crept into the Christian Church. Nullus pudor est ad meliora transire, saith Ambrose in his answer to Symmachus, what shame is it to grow better? Quid facies? saith Lactantius, majores ne potius an rationem sequeris? Si rationem mavis, discedere te necesse est ab institutis & auctoritate majorum: quoniam id solum rectum est, quod ratio praescribit. Sin autem pietas majores sequi suadet: fateris igitur & stultos illos esse qui excogitatis contra rationem religionibus servierint; & te ineptum qui id colas quod falsum esse conviceris. Where reason and meer authority of forefathers stand in

competition, he is more a child than a man that knows not on which side to give his suffrage. But with the greatest strength, and clearest reason *Arnobius* speaks in this case. *Itaque cum nobis intenditis aversionem à religione priorum, causam convenit ut inspiciatis, non factum, nec quid reliquerimus opponere, sed secuti quid simus potissimum contrari.* C. gent. l. 2. When you charge us, saith he, that we are revolted from the religion of our forefathers, you ought not presently to condemn the fact, but to examine the reasons of it; neither ought you so much to look at what we have left, as what it is we have embraced. *Nam si mutare sententiam culpa est ulla vel crimen, & à veteribus institutis in alias res novas voluntatesque migrare, criminatio ista & vos spectat, qui toties vitam consuetudinemque mutastis; qui in mores alios, atque alios ritus priorum condemnatione transistis.* If meer departing from the religion of our ancestors be the great fault, all those who own themselves to be Christians, were themselves guilty of it when they revolted from *Heathenism*. If it be here said that the case is different, because there was sufficient reason for it, which there is not as to the corruptions of the *Christian Church*; if so, then all the dispute is taken off from the matter of fact, or the revolt, to the causes inducing to it; and if the Protestant be not able as to the causes of our separation from *Rome* to manifest that they were sufficient, let him then be triumphed over by the *Romanist*, and not before. I assert then, and that with much assurance of mind, that the principles of the *Reformation* are justifiable upon the same grounds of reason, which the embracing Christianity was, when men of *Heathens* became Christians; and that the arguments made use of by the *Romanists* against our separation from them, are such as would have justified a *Pagan Philosopher* in not embracing Christianity. For if it be unlawful for any party of men, to divide from others in a matter of religion which pretends antiquity and universality, it had been unlawful for a *Philosopher* to have deserted *Paganism*, as well as for a *Protestant* to depart from *Rome*. For according to the principles of the *Romanists*, the judgement in the cause of the separation, and of the truth of religion lies in that party from which we depart; if we do now but apply this to

the old Roman Senate or Emperors in the case of Christian religion and dividing from Heathen worship, we shall quickly see how easie a matter it will be to make Christianity it self a Schism, and the doctrine of Christ the greatest heresie. But as strong as those pretences were then, or have been since, the power of the Doctrine of Christ hath been so great, as to conquer them, and thereby to manifest, that it was of God, when such potent prejudices were not able to withstand it. Of which Antiquity is the first.

*Minut. in Octa-
vio p. 6.*

2. The large and universal spread of Pagan Religion, when Christianity came into the world; there was never so great Catholicism, as in Heathen worship, when the Apostles first appeared in the Gentile world. *Inde adeo per universa imperia, provincias, oppida, videmus singulos sacrorum ritus gentiles habere, & Deos colere municipes, saith Cæcilius in Minutius Felix.* The great charge against the Christians was Novellism, that they brought in a strange and unheard of Religion. The common Question was, *Where was your Religion before Jesus of Nazareth?* as it hath been since, *Where was your Religion before Luther?* and the same answer which served then, will stand unmovable now, *there where no other Religion is, in the Word of God.* For this was the weapon whereby the Primitive Christians defended themselves against the assaults of Paganism, and the evidences they brought that the doctrine preached by them, and contained in the Scriptures, was originally from God, were the only means of overthrowing Paganism, notwithstanding its pretended universality.

Apol. c. 38.

3. Settlement by Laws of Heathen worship. This was so much pretended and pleaded for, that as far as we can find, by the History of the Primitive Church, the pretence on which the Christians suffered, was sedition, and opposing the established Laws. The Christians were reckoned *inter illicitas factiones*, as appears by Tertullian, among unlawful Corporations; the Politicians and States men were all for preserving the Laws; they troubled not themselves much about any Religion, but only that which was settled by Law they sought to uphold, because the acting contrary to it might bring some disturbance to the civil State. There were several Laws which

which the *Christians* were then brought under, and condemned for the breach of. 1. *The law against heteria, or conventicles*, as they were pleased frequently to stifle the meeting of *Christians* together; thence the places where the *Christians* assembled for worship, were commonly called *Conventicula*; ita appellabant loca, saith *Heraldus*, ubi congregabantur *Christiani* oraturi, & verbi divini interpretationem accepturi, ac sacras *Synaxes* habituri: but *Elmenhorstius* more shortly; *Conventicula* loca sunt ubi *Christiani* congregati orare consueverunt. The places where the *Christians* did meet and pray together were called *Conventicles*: in *Basilica* *Scitmini* ubi ritus *Christiani* est conventiculum, saith *Ammianus Marcellinus*; cur immaniter conventicula dirui? saith *Arnobius*; qui universum populum cum ipso pariter conventiculo concremavit, as *Lactantius* likewise speaks. Now the reason of the name was, because the *Heathens* judged these assemblies of *Christians* to be *Illegal Societies*. For which we are to understand; that in the time of the *Roman Emperours*, when they grew suspicious of their own safety, they severely prohibited all those *Sodalities*, or *Societies* and *Colledges*, which were very much in use in the *Roman Commonwealth*, in imitation of the *triclaei* in the *Cities of Greece*. These were such societies of persons, which voluntarily confederated together either for some particular design, or for preserving Love and Friendship among each other, and thence had their frequent meetings in common together. Now the more numerous these were, and the more closely they confederated, the more jealous eye the *Roman Emperours* had upon them, because of some clandestine designs, which they suspected might be carried on for disturbance of the *Publick Peace* in such suspicious meetings. Thence came out many particular edicts of the *Emperours* against all such kinds of societies.

Observat. in
Arnob. l. 4.

Histor. l. 27.
Arnob. l. 4.

Lactant. l. 5.
c. 11.

Now when the *Christians* began to be somewhat numerous, and had according to the principles of their Religion frequent Assemblies for Divine worship, and did confederate together by such Symbols, of being washed with water, and eating and drinking together (which was all the *Heathens* apprehended by their use of baptism, and the Lords Supper)

lib. 10. ep. 97.

Apolog. cap.
38.

the *Proconsuls* and other *Magistrates* in their several *Provinces* bring the *Christians* under these *Edicts* and so punished them for the breach of the *Laws*. Which as appears by *Pliny* his *Epistle* to *Trajan* was the only account on which the *wiser Heathens* did proceed against the *Christians*; for we see he troubled not himself much about the truth and evidence of *Christian Religion*, but such persons were brought before him, and after he had interrogated them whether they were *Christians*, or no, several times, if they persisted, he then punished them not so much for their *Religion*, as for their obstinacy and contempt of authority. For so much is implied in those words of his, *Neque enim dabitabam, qualecunque esset quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe, & inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri*: that whatever their Religion was, their obstinacy and disobedience deserved punishment. That which the *Christians* now pleaded for themselves, why they should not be reckoned among the *factions* of the people, was that which they gave in answer to *Pliny*, that all their fault was, *Quod essent soliti statò die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem; seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent*. That they were wont upon their solemn dayes to meet together for divine worship, and to covenant with each other only for the practice of those things which were as much for the good of mankind as their own, viz. that they would not wrong and defraud others, as to their bodies or estates. And *Tertullian* approves of the Law against factions, as *de providentia & modestia publica, ne civitas in partes scinderetur*, as wisely intended to prevent *Seditions*; but withal pleads, that the society of *Christians* could not be reckoned *inter illicitas factiones*; for, saith he, *hac coitio Christianorum merito sane illicita si illicitis par; merito damnanda si quis de ea queritur eo titulo quo de factionibus querela est. In cujus perniciem aliquando convenimus? Hoc sumus congregati quod & dispersi; hoc universi quod & singuli; neminem ledentes, neminem contristantes; quum probi, quum boni coeunt, quum pii, quum casti congregantur, non est factio dicenda sed curia*. If, saith he,

the

the Societies of Christians were like others, there might be some reason to condemn them, under the head of factions: but as long as we meet together for no mans injury, that whether divided, or assembled, we are still the same, that we grieve and injure no body; when such a company of good men meet together, it is rather a Council than a faction.

2. Another Law the Christians were brought under, was that against Innovations in Religion; thence it was laid so much to the charge of the Christians, that they did *ἑν πρὸς ἐναντίον*, go contrary to the established Law; as Porphyrie said of Origen, because he was a Christian, he did *ἑστιασὶς ἑν καὶ ἐναντίον*, and when he speaks of Ammonius revolting from Christianity to Paganism, *εὐδὺς πρὸς τὸ καὶ νόμους πολιτείαν μετεβάλετο*, he turned to the way of life, which was agreeable to the established Laws. Now Christianity was every where looked on as a great Innovation, inso-much that the Christians were accused to be *legum, morum, natura inimici*, as enemies to mankind as well as the Laws, 4. because they drew men off from that way of Religion which mankind had generally agreed in. Thence *Emilianus* the Prefect of Egypt, when he bids the Christians return to Paganism, he used these expressions, *ἐπὶ τὸ καὶ εὖσιν τρέπαδος, ἐπιλαδέσθαι τὸ καὶ πρὸς εὖσιν*, to return to the common sense of mankind, and to forget what was so much against it, as he supposed Christianity to be. When Paul preached at Athens, his first accusation was, that he was a Preacher of strange Deities, because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection. And *Demetrius* at Ephesus knew no such potent argument against Paul, as that his Religion destroyed the worship of Diana, whom all Asia and the world worship. So that the primitive Christians were then accounted the *Antipodes* to the whole world, on which account they were so severely dealt with; most Common-wealths observing the counsel of *Mecenas* to *Augustus*, in Dio, to be sure to have a watchful eye upon all Innovations in Religion, because they tend so much to the disturbance of the Civil State.

Apud Euseb. l. 6.
Ecclesi. hist. cap.
19.

Textul. Apol. c.

Apud Euseb.
Ecclesi. hist. l. 7.
cap. 11.

A. 17. 18.

19. 27.

3. The Law of Sacrilege. Thence *Lactantius* calls their Laws, *Constitutiones Sacrilega*. *Quinctian* *sceleratissimi homicida*.

Lactan. l. 5.
cap. 11.

homicida contra pios jura impia condiderunt; nam & constitutiones Sacrilegae, & disputationes Jurisperitorum leguntur injusta; and as he tells us, Domitius Ulpianus had collected all those Rescripta nefaria together, which concerned the Christians; from hence it was, Christianity by Pliny, is called amentia, by Tacitus exitiabilis Superstitio, by Suetonius Superstitio nova & exitiabilis; so much did these three great men agree, in condemning the best Religion in the world for madness, and new, and detestable Superstition; the ground of the great pique was the enmity declared by Christians against the Idolatrous Temples, and worship of the Heathens.

Plin. ep. l. 10.
ep. 97.

Tacit. An. l. 15.
Sueton. in Nerone.

Tertul. Ap. c. 27
c. 35.

Apol. c. 29.

Herald. in Tertul.
Apol. c. 29.

Apol. c. 32.

cap. 33.

4. The Law against Treason; for sometimes they proceeded so high, as to accuse the Christians *lese Majestatis*, and thence they are commonly called *publici hostes*, enemies to all civil Government. Which they inferred from hence: 1. Because they would not sacrifice for the Emperours safety; *Ideo committimus*, saith Tertullian, in *Majestatem Imperatorum, quia illos non subjecimus rebus suis; Quia non ludimus de officio salutis eorum, qui eam non putamus in manibus esse plumbatis*. The accusation for Treason lay in their refusing to supplicate the Idols for the Emperours welfare. 2. Because they would not swear by the Emperours Genius. Thence Saturninus said to the Martyr, *Tantum jura per genium Caesaris nostri*, if he would but swear by the Genius of Caesar, he should be saved. Yet though they refused to swear by the Emperours genius, they did not refuse to testify their Allegiance, and to swear by the Emperours safety. *Sed & juramus*, saith Tertullian, *Sicut non per genios Caesarum, ita per salutem eorum quae est augustior omnibus genis*. 3. Because they would not worship the Emperours as Gods; which was grown then a common custome. *Non enim Deum Imperatorem dicam, vel quia mentiri nescio, vel quia illum deridere non audeo, vel quia nec ipse se Deum volet dici si homo sit*, as the same Author speaks. Nay the primitive Christians were very scrupulous of calling the Emperour *Dominus*, *hoc enim Dei est cognomen*, because the name Lord was an attribute of Gods, and applyed as his name to him in Scripture. The reason of this Scrupulosity was not from any question

question they made of the *Sovereignty* of Princes, or their obligation to obedience to them (which they are very free in the acknowledgment of) but from a jealousy and just suspicion that something of *Divine honour* might be implied in it, when the adoration of Princes was grown a custom. Therefore *Tertullian* to prevent mis-understandings, saith, *cap. 34.*
Dicam plane Imperatorem Dominum, sed more communi, sed quando non cogor ut Dominum Dei vice dicam. They refused not the name in a common sense, but as it implied *Divine honour*.

4. Because they would not observe the publick festivals of the Emperors in the way that others did, which it seems were observed with abundance of looseness and debauchery by all sorts of persons; and as *Tertullian* smartly says, *malorum cap. 35.*
morum licentia pietas erit; & occasio luxurie religio deputabitur: Debauchery is accounted a piece of loyalty, and intemperance a part of religion. Which made the Christians rather hazard the reputation of their loyalty, than bear a part in so much rudeness as was then used, and thence they abhorred all the solemn spectacles of the Romans, *nihil est nobis, saith the same Author, dictu, visu, auditu, cum insania cap. 38.*
Circi, cum impudicitia Theatri, cum atrocitate arene, cum Xysti vanitate. They had nothing to do either with the madness of the Cirque, or the immodesty of the Theatre, or the cruelty of the Amphitheatre, or the vanity of the publick wrestlings. We see then what a hard Province the Christians had, when so many Laws were laid as birdlime in their way to catch them, that it was impossible for them to profess themselves Christians, and not run into a promunire by their Laws. And therefore it cannot be conceived that many out of affectation of novelty should then declare themselves Christians, when so great hazards were run upon the professing of it. Few soft-spirited men, and lovers of their own ease, but would have found some fine distinctions and nice evasions to have reconciled themselves to the publick Laws by such things which the Primitive Christians so unanimously refused, when tending to profaneness or Idolatry. And from this discourse we cannot but conclude with the Apostle Paul, that the weapons whereby the Apostles and

2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. • Primitive Christians encountered the Heathen world, were not fleshly or weak, but exceeding strong and powerful, in that they obtained so great a conquest over the imaginations and carnal reasonings of men (which were their strong-holds they secured themselves in) as to make them readily to forsake their Heathen-worship, and become chearful servants to Christ. Thus we see the power of the doctrine of Christ, which prevailed over the principles of education, though backt with pretended antiquity, universality, and establishment by civil Laws.

Seet. 22.

2.

But this will further appear if we consider that not only the matters of faith were contrary to the principles of education, but because many of them seemed incredible to mens natural reason; that we cannot think persons would be over-forward to believe such things. Every one being so ready to take any advantage against a religion which did so little flatter corrupt nature either as to its power or capacity; in so much that those who preached this Doctrine, declared openly to the world, that such persons who would judge of the Christian Doctrine, by such principles which meer natural reason did proceed upon (such a one I suppose it is whom the Apostle calls *Πυχρὸς ἀνθρώπος* one that owned nothing but natural reason, whereby to judge of Divine Truths) could not entertain matters of faith, or of Divine revelation, because such things would seem but folly to him that owned no higher principle than Philosophy, or that did not believe any Divine inspiration; neither can such a one know them, because a Divine revelation, is the only way to come to a thorough understanding of them: and a person who doth not believe such a Divine revelation it is impossible he should be a competent judge of the truth of the Doctrine of Christ. So that the only ground of receiving the Doctrine of the Gospel is upon a Divine revelation, that God himself by his Son and his Apostles, hath revealed these deep mysteries to the world, on which account it is we are bound to receive them, although they go beyond our reach and comprehension. But we see generally in the Heathen world how few of those did believe the Doctrine of Christ in comparison, who were the great admirers of the Philosophy, and way of learning which

was then cried up: the reason was, because Christianity not only contained far deeper mysteries than any they were acquainted with, but delivered them in such a way of authority, commanding them to believe the doctrine they preached on the account of the Divine Authority of the revealers of it. Such a way of proposal of doctrines to the world the Philosophy of the Greeks was unacquainted with, which on that account they derided as not being suited to the exact method which their sciences proceeded in. No doubt had the Apostles come among the Greeks μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας with a great deal of pomp and ostentation, and had fed mens curiosities with vain and unnecessary speculations, they might have had as many followers among the Greeks for their sakes, as Christ had among the Jews for the sake of the loaves. But the matters of the Gospel being more of inward worth and moment, than of outward pomp and shew, the vain and empty Greeks presently find a quarrel with the manner of proposing them; that they came not in a way of clear demonstration, but stood so much upon faith as soon as they were delivered. Thence Celsus and Galen think they have reason enough to reject the Laws of Moses and Christ, because Celsus calls them νόμους ἀναπόδεικτους, Galen Christianity διατελευτην ἀναπόδεικτον, that they were such doctrines which require faith and obedience, without giving mens reason an account of the things commanded. As though the authority of a Legislator sufficiently manifested, were not enough to enforce a Law, unless a sufficient account were given of the thing required to the purblind reason of every individual person acted by passions and private interests, as to the justice and equity of it. And so the primary obligation on mans part to faith and obedience, must arise not from the evidence of Divine Authority, but of the thing it self which is revealed, to the most partial judgement of every one to whom it is proposed. Which those who know how short the stock of reason is at the best in men, and how easily that which is, is fashioned and moulded according to prejudices and interests already entertained, will look upon only as a design to comply with the carnal desires of men, in that thereby none shall be bound to go any further, than this blind and corrupted guide shall lead them. Now these

Orig. l. i. c. Cels.
Gal. de differ.
puls. lib. 2. c. 4.

being the terms on which the Gospel of Christ must have expected entertainment in the Gentile world, how impossible had it been ever to have found any success among men, had there not been sufficient evidence given by a power of miracles, that however strange and incredible the doctrine might seem, yet it was to be believed, because there was sufficient means to convince men that it was of Divine revelation.

Scot. 23.

Neither were the matters of faith only contrary to the inclinations of the world, but so were the precepts of life or those things in Christianity which concerned practice. There are two things which are the main Scope and design of Christianity in reference to mens lives, and to take them off from their sins, and from the world; and of all things these are they which mens hearts are so bewitched with. Now the precepts of the Gospel are such which require the greatest purity of heart and life, which call upon men to deny themselves, and all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world; that, all that name the name of Christ must depart from iniquity; that, all true Christians must be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and must perfect holiness in the fear of God. And the Gospel enforceth these precepts of holiness with the most terrible denunciations of the wrath of God on those who disobey them; that, the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That, the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. That, no persons who live in the habitual practice of any known sin, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. That no man should deceive them with vain words, for because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience; that men do but vainly flatter themselves when they seek to reconcile unholy lives with the hopes of future happiness; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. And then in reference to the things of this present life which men busie themselves so much about, the Gospel declares, that, they who love this world, the love of the Father is not in them; that, the friendship of this world

is.

Mat. 5. 8, 16.

Tit. 2. 12.

2 Tim. 2. 19.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

2 Thes. 1. 7, 8.

Rom. 1. 18.

1 Cor. 6. 2, 10.

Gal. 4. 20.

Ephes. 5. 5, 6.

Heb. 12. 14.

1 Joh. 2. 14.

Chap. 9. *The Truth of Scripture.*

is enmity with God, and whosoever will be a friend to the world is an enemy to God: That Christians must not set their affections on earth, but on the things in Heaven; That the conversation of true Christians is in Heaven. That we ought not to lay up our treasure on earth, but in Heaven; That we must not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Now the whole design of the doctrine of Christ being to perswade men to lead a holy and heavenly life while they are in this world, and thereby to be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the Saints in light, can we think so many men whose hearts were wedded to sin, and the world, could so suddenly be brought off from both without a divine power accompanying that doctrine which was preached to them? And therefore the Apostle saith, *ἐπιαισχύνουμαι τὸ ὀψυγγέλιον τοῦ χριστοῦ*, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; i. e. though the Gospel of Christ be the only true mystery, yet I do not by it as the Heathens are wont to do with their famous Eleusinian mysteries which were kept so secret by all the mystæ and ἐμπόρῃ; but, saith he, I know no reason I have to be ashamed of any thing in the Gospel, that I should labour its concealment to advance its veneration; but the more publick the Gospel is, the more it manifests its power; for through it God is pleased mightily to work, in order to the salvation both of Jew and Gentile. And of all the success of the Gospel, that upon the hearts and lives of men deserves the greatest consideration.

The great efficacy and power of the Gospel was abundantly seen in that great alteration which it wrought in all those who were the hearty imbracers of it. The Philosophers did very frequently and deservedly complain of the great inefficacy of all their moral precepts upon the minds of men, and that by all their instructions, *politiora non meliora, ingenia fiunt*; men improved more in knowledge than goodness; but now Christianity not only enforced duties on men with greater power and authority: For the Scriptures do, as Saint

James 4.
Col. 3. 1, 2.
Phil. 3. 20.
Marth. 6. 20.
2 Cor. 4. 18.

Col. 1. 12.

Rom. 1. 16.

August. de Civ.
vi. Dei. l. 2.
c. 19.

Gymbals.

Cymbals, the Philosophers, but awe the souls of men with the Majesty of that God from whom they came. Neither was it only a great and empty sound which was heard in the preaching of the Gospel, but when God thundred therein, he broke down the stately Cedars, and shook the Wilderiness, and made the Hinds to calve (as it is said of Thunder, called the voice of the Lord in Scripture) he humbled the pride of men, unsettled the Gentile world from its former foundations, and wrought great alterations on all those who hearkened to it. The whole design of the Gospel is couched in those words which Saint Paul tells us were spoken to him by Christ himself, when he appointed him to be an Apostle, to open mens eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which were sanctified by faith in Christ. And the efficacy of this doctrine in order to these great ends, was abundantly seen in the preaching of that Apostle, who was so instrumental in converting the world to piety and sobriety, as well as to the doctrine of Christ. What strange persons were the Corinthians before they became Christians ! for when the Apostle had enumerated many of the vilest persons of the world, he presently adds, And such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God. The more dangerous the distemper is, the more malignant its nature, the more inveterate its continuance, the greater the efficacy of the remedy which works a cure of it. The power of grace is the more seen in conversion, the greater the sins have been before it. It is an easie matter in comparison to remove a disease at its first on-set, of what it is to cure it when it becomes Chronical. The power of the Gospel wrought upon all sorts and kinds of persons to manifest to the world there was no distemper of mens souls so great, but there was a possibility of a remedy for it ; and not only so, but pregnant and visible instances were given of the power and efficacy of it. For they themselves shew of us, saith the Apostle, what manner of entring in we had among you, and how ye turned to God from Idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from Heaven, whom he raised from

from the dead, even *Jesus*, which delivered us from the wrath to come. Now that which manifests the exceeding great power and excellency of the Gospel, was, that it not only turned men from one way of worship to another, which is a matter of no great difficulty, but that it turned men together with that from their *lusts* and *sensuality*, to a *holy* and *unblameable* life. For men being more in love with their *sins*, than with their *opinions*, it must needs be a greater power which draws men from the practice of *habitual sins*, than that which only makes them change their *opinions*, or alter the way of worship they were brought up in. This is that which *Origen* throughout his *Books* against *Celsus* triumphs in as the most signal evidence of a divine power in the *Doctrine of Christ*, that it wrought so great an alteration on all that truly embraced it, that of *vitious*, *debauched*, and *dissolute*, it made them *temperate*, *sober*, and *religious*, ἐπιποσέτους ἀνδρώπους ἐπιστρέφει ἀπὸ τῆς ἡρώσεως ἧς κακῶν, ἐπὶ τῇ κατὰ φύσιν καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ ἧς λοιπῶν ἀρετῶν βίον. The *Doctrine of Christ* did convert the most wicked persons who embraced it, from all their debaucheries, to a life most suitable to nature and reason, and to the practice of all virtues. Therefore certainly the Gospel could not want that commendation among all *ingenuous Moralists*, that it was the most excellent instrument in the world to reform the lives of men, and to promote real goodness in it. When they could not but take notice of so many persons continually so brought off from their follies and vain conversations, to a life, serious, sober, and unblameable; nay and some of the *Christians* were of so much integrity and goodness, that their greatest enemies were forced to say that their only fault was, that they were *Christians*. Bonus vir Cajus Sejus, tantum quod Christianus. A very good man, only a Christian. But one would think this should have made them have a higher opinion of Christianity, when it did so suddenly make so many good men in the world. Especially when this power was so manifest on such persons who were supposed incapable of being reformed by *Philosophy*, young, illiterate, and mean spirited persons; therefore it may be justly supposed that it was not by the strength of their own reason that this alteration was wrought within them, but by that *Divine power* which,

C. Celsus l. 2.
p. 78. 85. lib. 17.
p. 21.

which was able to tame the most unruly ; to instruct the most ignorant, to raise up the most sordid persons to such a generous temper, as to slight the good things of this life, in comparison with those to come. And so remarkable was the difference of life then between those that were Christians, and those who were not (as there is still between true Christians, and meer pretenders) that Origen dares Celsus to compare them in point of morality with any other Societies in the world.

Orig. c.
Celsus, l.
3. p. 128.

αἱ γὰρ τῶ θεῷ Χριστῷ μαθηταῖς εἰσιν ἐκκλησίαι, συν-
εξισταζόμεναι ἅ ὧν περιχώροι ὡν ἐκκλησίαις, ὡς φασὶν ἄλλοι
εἶναι ἐν κόσμῳ. τίς γὰρ ἐκ τῶν ὁμολογῶντων καὶ τοῦ χρίστος ἡ ἀπό τῆς
ἐκκλησίας, καὶ συγκρίσει βελτιώσαν ἐλάττω, πολλῶν κρείττω πυχ-
νεν ἢ ἐν τοῖς δήμοις ἐκκλησιῶν ; For the Churches of God,
which are disciplined to Christ, being compared with other So-
cieties, shine among them like lights in the world. For who
can but confess, that even the worser part of the Christian
Churches exceeds the best of the popular Assemblies ? For, as
he goes on, the Church of God which is at Athens, that is
πραΐα πῆ καὶ ἡσυχία, very quiet and peaceable, because it seeks
to approve itself to God ; but the popular Assembly at Athens
that is σαώδης, seditious and quarrelsome, and in nothing com-
parable to the Church of God there. So it is, if we compare
the Churches of Corinth and Alexandria with the Assemblies
of the people there. So that any candid inquirer after truth will
exceedingly wonder (how such fair Islands should appear
nantes in gurgite vasto, in the midst of such a Sea of wicked-
ness as it was in those Cities) how these Churches of God should
be planted in such rude and prophane places. So the same Au-
thor goes on to compare the Churches Senate with that of
the Cities, the Churches Officers with theirs, and appeals to
themselves, that even those amongst them who were most
lukewarm in their office, did yet far exceed all the City Ma-
gistrates in all manner of virtues. From whence he rational-
ly concludes, εἰ ὁ παῦρ ἕως ἔχει, πῶς ἐκ ἔυλογον μὲν νομίζεν
ὡς τῶ Ἰησοῦ πάντα δυνατὰ δεικνύμενα, ὅτι ἐκ τῆς πυχῆς θεο-
τις ὡς ἐν αὐτῷ ; If these things be so, how can it but be most ra-
tional to adore the Divinity of Jesus, who was able to accom-
plish such great things ? And that not upon one or two, but
upon such great multitudes as were then converted to the

Christian

Christian faith. We read of one *Phadon*, and one *Polemon* brought from their *debaucheries* by *Socrates* and *Xenocrates*, but what are these compared with those who were turned from their *sins* to *God* by the *Gospel* of *Christ*? καὶ ὡς ἔκ τινος πλῆθος Ἑλλήνων, εἰς πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς ἐκείνους, καὶ εἰς τὸν ὁλοκλήρον, μεταλλάττοντες ἀπὸ πάντων καὶ μοχθηροτάτων βίης, ἐπιλοπόνησαν πρὸς τὸ Ἰησοῦ ἐμόνοι πότε οἱ δώδεκα, ἀλλ' αἱ καὶ πολλαπλασίους, &c. The twelve Apostles were but the first-fruits of that plentiful Harvest of Converts which followed afterwards. And although *Celsus* (like an *Epicurean*) seems to deny the possibility of any such thing as conversion, because customary sins become a second nature, that no punishments can reform them; Yet, saith *Origen*, herein he not only contradicts us Christians, but all such as were ἀνθρώπων φιλοσοφούντες who owned any generous principles of Philosophy, and did not despair of recovering virtue, as a thing feasible by humane nature, and gives instances *ad hominem*, to prove the possibility of the thing from the ancient Heroes, *Hercules* and *Ulysses*, from the two Philosophers, *Socrates* and *Musonius*, and the two famous converts to Philosophy, *Phadon* and *Polemon*. But yet, saith he, these are not so much to be wondered at, that the eloquence and reason of the Philosophers should prevail on some very few persons, but that the mean and contemptible language of the Apostles should convert such multitudes from intemperance to sobriety, from injustice to fair-dealing, from cowardise to the highest constancy, yea so great as to lay down their lives for the sake of virtue; how can we but admire so divine a power as was seen in it? And therefore, saith he, we conclude, ὅτι τῷ θεῷ λόγῳ ἀμεταμέληται καὶ κακίαν φυσικωτάτην ἐστὶν ἐμὴν ἐν ἀδύνατον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπὶ παντὶ χαλεπὸν. That it is so far from being impossible, that it is not at all difficult for corrupt nature to be changed by the Word of God. *Lactantius* excellently manifests that Philosophy could never do so much good in the world as Christianity did, because that was not suited at all to common capacities, and did require so much skill in the Arts to prepare men for it, which it is impossible all should be well skilled in, which yet are as capable of being happy, as any others are. And how inefficacious the precepts of Philosophy were, appears by the Philosophers themselves, who were far from

Orig. l. i. p. 50.

Or. l. 3. p. 150.

Lactant. de fals. sup. l. 3. c. 25.

Cap. 26.

having command by them over their *Masterless* passions, and were fain sometimes to confess that nature was too headstrong to be kept in by such weak reins as the precepts of Philosophy were : But , saith he , what great command divine precepts have upon the souls of men , daily experience shows. *Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus , maledicus , effrenatus ; paucissimis Dei verbis , tam placidum quam ovem reddam. Da cupidum , avarum , tenacem ; jam tibi eum liberalem dabo , & pecuniam suam plenis manibus largientem. Da timidum doloris ac mortis ; jam cruces , & ignes , taurum contemnet. Da libidinosum , adulterum , ganeonem ; jam sobrium , castum , continentem videbis. Da crudelem , & sanguinis appetentem , jam in veram clementiam furor ille mutabitur. Da injustum , incipientem , peccatorem , continuo & aequus , & prudens , & innocens erit.* In which words that elegant writer doth by a Rhetorical Scheme set out the remarkable alteration which was in any who became true Christians, that although they were passionate, covetous, fearful, lustful, cruel, unjust, vitious, yet upon their being Christians, they became mild, liberal, couragious, temperate, merciful, just and unblameable ; which never any were brought to by meer Philosophy, which rather teacheth the art of concealing vices, than of healing them. But now when Christianity was so effectual in the cure of those distempers, which Philosophy gave over as beyond its skill and power, when it cured them with so great success, and that not in a Paracelsian way, for them to relapse afterwards with greater violence, but it did so thoroughly unsettle the *fomes morbi*, that it should never gather to so great a head again ; doth not this argue a power more than Philosophical, and that could be no less than divine power which tended so much to reform the world, and to promote true goodness in it ?

Sect. 24.

Thus we have considered the contrariety of the doctrine of Christ to mens natural inclinations, and yet the strange success it had in the world, which in the last place will appear yet more strange, when we add the almost continual opposition it met with from worldly power and policy. Had it been possible for a cunningly devised fable, or any meer contrivance of impostors to have prevailed in the world, when the most

potent

potent and *subtile persons* bent their whole wits and *designs* for *suppressing* it? Whatever it were in others, we are sure of some of the *Roman Emperours*, as *Julian* and *Dioclesian*, that it was their *master-design* to root out and *abolish Christianity*; and was it *only* the *subtily* of the *Christians* which made these *persons* give over their work in *despair* of *accomplishing* it? If the *Christians* were such *subtile men*, whence came all their *enemies* to agree in one *common calumny*, that they were a company of *poor, weak, ignorant, inconsiderable men*! and if they were so, how came it to pass that by all their *power* and *wisdom* they could never *exterminate* these *persons*, but as they *cut them down*, they *grew up the faster*, and *multiplied* by their *subtraction* of them! There was something then certainly *peculiar* in *Christianity*, from all other *doctrines*, that it not only was not *advanced* by any *civil power*, but it got ground by the *opposition* it met with in the world. And therefore it is an *observable circumstance*, that the first *Christian Emperour* (who acted as *Emperour* for *Christianity*) viz. *Constantine* (for otherwise I know what may be said for *Philippus*) did not *appear* in the world till *Christianity* had spread it self over most parts of the *habitable world*. God thereby letting us see, that though the *civil power*, when become *Christian*, might be very useful for *protecting Christianity*, yet that he stood in no need at all of it, as to the *Propagation* of it abroad in the world. But we see it was quite otherwise in that *Religion* which had *Mars* its *ascendant*, viz. *Mahometism*; For like *Paracelsus*. his *Demon*, it always sate upon the pummel of the sword, and made its way in the world meerly by *force* and *violence*; and as its first *constitution* had much of *blood* in it, so by it hath it been fed and *nourished* ever since. But it was quite otherwise with the *Christian Religion*; it never *thrived* better than in the most *barren places*, nor *triumphed* more, than when it *suffered* most; nor *spread* it self further than when it *encountred* the greatest *opposition*. Because therein was seen the great *force* and *efficacy* of the *doctrine* of *Christ*, that it bore up mens *spirits* under the greatest *miseries* of *life*, and made them with *chearfulness* to *undergo* the most exquisite *torments* which the *cruelty* of *Tyrants* could *invent*. The

Stoicks and Epicureans boasts that their wise man would be happy in the Bull of Phalaris, were but empty and Thra-
 fonomical words, which none would venture the truth of by
 an experiment upon themselves. It was the Christian alone,
 and not the Epicurean, that could truly say in the midst of
 torments, *Suave est & nihil caro*, and might justly alter a
 little of that common saying of the Christians, and say,
Non magna loquimur, sed patimur, as well as *vivimus*; the
 Christians did not speak great things, but do and suffer them.
 And this gained not only great reputation of integrity to
 themselves, but much advanced the honour of their Religion
 in the world, when it was so apparently seen, that no force
 or power was able to withstand it. Will not this at least per-
 swade you that our Religion is true, and from God, saith Ar-
 nobius? *Quod cum genera pœnarum tanta sint à vobis propo-*
sita Religionis huius sequentibus leges, augeatur res magis,
& contra omnes minas, atque interdicta formidinum animosius
populus obnitatur, & ad credendi studium, prohibitionis
ipsius stimulis excietur? ————— Itane istud non divi-
 num & sacrum est, aut sine Deo, eorum tantas animorum
 fieri conversiones ut cum carnifices uinci, alique innumeri
 cruciatus, quemadmodum diximus, impendeant credituris,
 veluti quadam dulcedine, atque omnium virtutum amore cor-
 reпти, cognitas accipiant rationes, atque mundi omnibus
 rebus praponant amicitias Christi? That no fears, penalties,
 or torments, were able to make a Christian alter his profession,
 but he would rather bid adieu to his life than to his Saviour.
 This Origen likewise frequently takes notice of, when Celsus
 had objected the novelty of Christianity; the more wonderful
 it is (saith Origen) that in so short a time it should so largely
 spread it self in the world; for if the cure of mens bodies be
 not wrought without Divine Providence, how much less the
 cure of so many thousands of souls which have been converted at
 once to humanity and Christianity, especially when all the powers
 of this doctrine, and yet notwithstanding all this opposition,
 ἐνίκησε, μὴ περὶ καὶς καὶ αὐτὸς ὡς λόγος. δεῖ καὶ ἡρώμεν. τοσούτων
 ἀνταγωνιστῶν ἰσχυέστερον. πάσης μὲν ἑλλάδος. ὅτι πλέον δὲ τὸ βαρ-
 βάρει ἐμμένοντες, καὶ μετεπίνοτες μυρίας ὅσας ἰούδας ἐπὶ τὴν κατ' αὐτὰρ

Arnob. l. 2. c.
 gentes.

lib. 1. c. Cel-
 sum. p. 21.
 V. etiam l. 2.
 p. 110.

Discourse. The Word of God prevailed, as not being able to be stopt by men, and became Master over all its enemies, and not only spread it self quite through Greece, but through a great part of the world besides, and converted an innumerable company of souls to the true worship and service of God. Thus we have now manifested from all the circumstances of the propagation of the doctrine of Christ, what evidence there was of a divine power accompanying of it, and how useful the first miracles were in order to it.

CHAP. X.

The difference of true miracles from false.

The unreasonableness of rejecting the evidence from miracles, because of impostures. That there are certain rules of distinguishing true miracles from false, and Divine from diabolical, proved from Gods intention in giving a power of miracles, and the providence of God in the world. The inconvenience of taking away the rational grounds of faith, and placing it on self-evidence. Of the self-evidence of the Scriptures, and the insufficiency of that for resolving the question about the authority of the Scriptures. Of the pretended miracles of Impostors and false Christs, as Barchochabas David el David and others. The rules whereby to judge true miracles from false. 1. True Divine miracles are wrought to confirm a Divine testimony. No miracles necessary for the certain conveyance of a Divine Testimony; proved from the evidences that the Scriptures could not be corrupted. 2. No miracles Divine which contradict Divine revelation. Of Popish miracles. 3. Divine miracles leave Divine effects on those who believe them. Of the miracles of Simon Magus. 4. Divine miracles tend to the overthrow of the devils power in the world: the antipathy of the doctrine of Christ to the devils designs in the world. 5. The distinction of true miracles from others, from the circumstances and manner of their operation. The miracles of Christ compared with those of the Heathen Gods. 6. God makes it evident to all impartial judgements that Divine miracles exceed created power. This manifested from the unparallel'd miracles of Moses and our Saviour. From all which the rational evidence of Divine revelation is manifested, as to the persons whom God imployes to teach the world.

SECT. I.

HAVING thus far stated the cases wherein miracles may justly be expected as a rational evidence of divine authority in the persons whom God imployes by way of peculiar message

message to the world, and in the prosecution of this discourse manifested the evidences of divine authority in Moses and the Prophets, and in our Saviour and his Apostles; the only remaining question concerning this subject, is, how we may certainly distinguish true and real miracles from such as are only pretended and counterfeit? For it being as evident that there have been impostures and delusions in the world as real miracles, the minds of men will be wholly to seek when to rely upon the evidence of miracles as an argument of divine authority in those persons who do them, unless a way be found out to distinguish them from each other. But if we can make it appear, that, unless men through weakness of judgement or incogitancy deceive themselves, they may have certain evidence of the truth of miracles, then there can be nothing wanting as to the establishment of their minds in the truth of that Doctrine which is confirmed by them. There hath been nothing which hath made men of better affections than understandings, so ready to suspect the strength of the evidence from miracles concerning divine testimony, as the multitude of impostures in the world under the name of miracles, and that the Scripture it self tells us we must not hearken to such as come with lying wonders. But may we not therefore safely rely on such miracles which we have certain evidence could not be wrought but by divine power, because forsooth the Devil may sometimes abuse the ignorance and credulity of unwary men? or is it because the Scripture forbids us to believe such as should come with a pretence of miracles, therefore we cannot rely on the miracles of Christ himself? which is as much as to say, because the Scripture tells us that we must not believe every spirit, therefore we must believe none at all; or because we must not entertain any other doctrine besides the Gospel, therefore we have no reason to believe that. For the ground whereby we are assured by the Scriptures, that the testimony of Christ was divine, and therefore his doctrine true, is because it was confirmed by such miracles as he did; now if that argument were insufficient which the Scriptures tell us was the great evidence of Christs being sent from God, we cannot give our selves a sufficient account in point of evidence, on which we believe the doctrine

of

of the Gospel to be true and divine. But the only rational pretence of any scruple in this case must be a supposed uncertainty in our rules of judging concerning the nature of miracles; for there be no certain *verities* or notes of difference, whereby to know divine miracles from delusions of senses and the impostures of the Devil. I must confess that there is an apparent insufficiency in the evidence from miracles; but if there be any certain rules of proceeding in this case, we are to blame nothing but our incredulity, if we be not satisfied by them. For the full clearing of this, I shall first make it appear that there may be certain evidence found out, whereby we may know true miracles from false, and divine from diabolical. And, Secondly, Enquire into those things which are the main notes of difference between them. First, That there may be certain evidence whereby to know the truth of miracles. I speak not of the difference *ex parte rei* between miracles, and those called wonders, as that the one exceed the power of created agents, and the other do not; for this leaves the enquirer as far to seek for satisfaction as ever; for granting that a divine power is seen in one, and not in the other, he must needs be still dissatisfied, unless it can be made evident to him that such things are from divine power, and others cannot be. Now the main distinction being placed here in the natures of the things abstractly considered, and not as they bear any evidence to our understandings, instead of resolving doubts it increaseth more; for, as for instance, in the case of the Magicians Rod's turning into Serpents, as well as Moses his; what satisfaction could this yield to any spectator, to tell him, that in the one there was a divine power, and not in the other, unless it were made appear by some evidence from the thing, that the one was a meer imposture, and the other a real alteration in the thing it self? I take it then for granted, that no general discourses concerning the formal difference of miracles and wonders considered in themselves, can afford any rational satisfaction to an inquisitive mind; that which alone is able to give it, must be something which may be discerned by any judicious and considerative person. And that God never gives to any a power of miracles, but he gives some such ground of satisfaction concerning

cerning them, will appear upon these two *considerations*.

1. *From Gods intention in giving to any this power of doing Miracles.* We have largely made it manifest that the end of true *Miracles* is to be a *confirmation* to the world of the *Divine commission* of the persons who have it, and that the *testimony* is *Divine* which is confirmed by it. Now if there be no way to know when *miracles* are true or false, this power is to no purpose at all; for men are as much to seek for *satisfaction*, as if there had been no such thing at all. Therefore if men are bound to believe a *Divine Testimony*, and to rely on the *miracles* wrought by the persons bringing it, as an evidence of it, they must have some assurance that these *miracles* could not come from any but a *Divine Power*.

2. *From the Providence of God in the World*; which if we own, we cannot imagine that *God* should permit the *Devil*, whose only design is to ruine mankind, to abuse the credulity of the world so far, as to have his lying wonders pass uncontrouled, which they must do, if nothing can be found out as a certain difference between such things as are only of *Diabolical*, and such as are of *Divine power*. If then it may be discovered that there is a *malignant Spirit* which acts in the world and doth produce strange things, either we must impute all strange things to him, which must be to attribute to him an infinite power, or else that there is a being infinitely perfect which crosseth this malignant Spirit in his designs; and if so, we cannot imagine he should suffer him to usurp so much tyranny over the minds of men, as to make those things pass in the more sober and inquisitive part of the world for *Divine miracles* which were only counterfeits and impostures. If then the Providence of *God* be so deeply engaged in the discovering the designs of *Satan*; there must be some means of this discovery, and that means can be supposed to be no other in this case, but some rational and satisfactory evidence, whereby we may know when strange and miraculous things are done by *Satan* to deceive men, and when by a *Divine Power* to confirm a *Divine Testimony*.

But how is it possible, say some, that miracles should be
Sc. 2.

Mat. 24. 24.

2 Thef. 2. 9.

any ground on which to believe a testimony Divine, when Christ himself hath told us, that there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; in so much that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect? and the Apostle tells us, that the coming of Antichrist will be with all power and signs, and lying wonders. How then can we fix on miracles as an evidence of Divine testimony, when we see they are common to good and bad men, and may seal indifferently either truth or falshood? To this I reply;

1. Men are guilty of doing no small disservice to the doctrine of Christ, when upon such weak and frivolous pretences they give so great an advantage to infidelity, as to call in question the validity of that which yielded so ample a testimony to the truth of Christian Religion. For if once the rational grounds on which we believe the Doctrine of Christ to be true and Divine, be taken away, and the whole evidence of the truth of it be laid on things not only derided by men of Atheistical spirits, but in themselves such as cannot be discerned or judged of by any but themselves, upon what grounds can we proceed to convince an unbeliever that the doctrine which we believe is true? If they tell him, that as light and fire manifest themselves, so doth the doctrine of the Scripture to those who believe it; It will be soon replied, that self-evidence in a matter of faith can imply nothing but either a firm persuasion of the mind concerning the thing propounded; or else that there are such clear evidences in the thing itself, that none who freely use their reason can deny it; the first can be no argument to any other person any further than the authority of the person who declares it to have such self-evidence to him, doth extend it self over the mind of the other; and to ones self it seems a strange way of arguing, I believe the Scriptures because they are true, and they are true because I believe them; for self-evidence implies so much, if by it be meant the persuasion of the mind, that the thing is true; but if by self-evidence be further meant such clear evidence in the matter propounded that all who do consider it, must believe it; I then further enquire whether this evidence doth lye in the naked proposal of the things to the understanding; and if so, then every one, who assents to this

proposition, that *the whole is greater than the part*, must likewise assent to this, that *the Scripture is the Word of God*; or whether doth the evidence lie, not in the *naked proposal*, but in the efficacy of the *Spirit of God* on the minds of those to whom it is propounded. Then, 1. The *self-evidence* is taken off from the *Written Word* which was the object, and removed to a quite different thing which is the *efficient cause*.

2. Whether then any persons who want this efficacious operation of the *Spirit of God*, are or can be bound to believe the *Scripture* to be *Gods Word*? If they are bound, the duty must be propounded in such a way as may be sufficient to convince them that it is their duty; but if all the evidence of the truth of the *Scripture* lie on this testimony of the *Spirit*, then such as want this, can have none at all. But if lastly, by this *self-evidence* be meant such an impress of *Gods authority* on the *Scriptures* that any who consider them as they ought, cannot but discern, I still further enquire, whether this impress lies in the positive assertions in *Scripture* that they are from *God*, and that cannot be unless it be made appear to be impossible that any writing should pretend to be from *God* when it is not; or else in the *written Books of Scripture*, and then let it be made appear that any one merely by the evidence of the writings themselves without any further arguments can pronounce the *Proverbs* to be the *Word of God*, and not the *Book of Wisdom*; and *Ecclesiastes* to be *Divinely inspired* and not *Ecclesiastical*: or else the self evidence must be in the excellency of the matters which are revealed in *Scripture*; but this still falls very short of resolving wholly the question whether the *Scripture* be the word of *God*? for the utmost that this can reach to is, that the things contained in *Scripture* are of so high and excellent a nature, that we cannot conceive that any other should be the author of them but *God* himself; all which being granted, I am as far to seek as ever what grounds I have to believe that those particular writings which we call the *Scripture* are the *Word of God*, or that *God* did immediately employ such and such Persons to write such and such books; for I may believe the substance of the doctrine to be of *God*, and yet not believe the books wherein it is contained, to be a *Divine* and *infallible testimony*; as

is evident in the many excellent *devotional Books* which are in the world.

But yet further, if the only ground on which we are to believe a *Doctrine Divine* be the *self-evidencing light*, and power of it, then I suppose there was the same ground of believing a *Divine Testimony* when the doctrine was declared without writing, by the first *Preachers* of it. So that by this method of proceeding, the ground of believing *Christ* to be sent as the *Messias* sent from *God*, must be wholly and solely resolved into this that there was so much *self-evidence* in this proposition uttered by *Christ*, *I am the light of the World*, that all the *Jews* had been bound to have believed him sent from *God* (for *light manifests it self*) although our *Saviour* had never done any one *miracle*, to make it appear that he came from *God*. And we cannot but charge our *Saviour* on this account with being at a very unnecessary expence upon the world in doing so many *miracles*, when the bare naked affirmation that he was the *Messias*, had been sufficient to have convinced the whole world. But is it conceivable then upon what account our *Saviour* should lay so much force on the *miracles* done by himself in order to the proving his *Testimony* to be *Divine*, that he saith himself, *that he had a greater witness than that of John* (who yet doubtless had *self-evidencing light* going along with his *Doctrine* too) *for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me*. Can any thing be more plain, or have greater *self-evidence* in it, than that our *Saviour* in these words doth lay the evidence of his *Divine Testimony* upon the *miracles* which he wrought, which on that account he so often appeals to, on this very Reason, *because they bear witness of him; and if they would not believe him on his own Testimony, yet they ought to believe him for his works sake*. Doth all this now amount only to a removing of prejudices from the Person of *Christ*? which yet according to the tenour of the objection we are considering of, it is impossible the power of *Miracles* should do, if these *miracles* may be so far done or counterfeited by false *Christs*, that we can have no certain evidence to distinguish the one from the other.

Which

Joh. 5. 36.

Joh. 10. 25,
38. 14. 11. 15.
24.

Which the objection pretends, and was the great thing Sect. 3.
 wherein *Celsus* the *Epicurean* triumphed so much, that Orig. lib. 2. c.
Christ should foretel that others should come and do miracles Cels.
 which they must not hearken to, and thence would infer as from
Christ's own confession that miracles have in them *ἰδὲν θεῖον*, no-
 thing divine but what may be done by wicked men: *πῶς ἔνι*
ῥέτλιον ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων ἢ μὴ θεῖον, τοῦ ὃ πάντας ἡγάδα; Is
 it not a wretched thing, saith he, that from the same works one
 should be accounted a God, and others Deceivers? Whereby
 those who would invalidate the Argument from miracles,
 may take notice how finely they fall in with one of the most
 bitter enemies of *Christian Religion*, and make use of the same
 arguments which he did; and therefore *Origens* reply to him,
 will reach them too. For, saith he, our Saviour in those
 words of his doth not bid men beware in general of such as did
 miracles, ἀλλ, ἀπὸ τῶν τοῖς ἀναποδείξιν ἑαυτοὺς ἰδὲν ἢ χεῖρον τῶ θεῷ, καὶ
πειρωμένοις διὰ τινῶν φαντασιῶν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ἐπιστρέφειν τὸ ἴνσῃ
μαδυντάς; but bids them beware of that when men gave themselves
 out to be the true Christ the Son of God, and endeavour to draw
Christ's Disciples from him, by some meer appearances instead
 of Miracles. Therefore Christ being evidently made appear
 to be the Son of God, by the powerful and uncontroled Mi-
 racles which he wrought, what pretence of Reason could
 there be to hearken to any who gave themselves out to be
Christ's, meerly from some strange wonders which they
 wrought? And from hence, as he further observes, may be
 justly inferred contrary to what *Celsus* imagined, that there
 was certainly an evidence of Divine Power in miracles, when
 these false *Christ's* gave themselves out to be *Christ's* meerly
 from the supposal that they had this power of doing miracles.
 And so it is evident in all the false *Christ's* which have ap-
 peared, they have made this their great pretence that they
 did many signs and wonders; which God might justly permit
 them to do, to punish the great infidelity of the *Jews* who
 would not believe in Christ notwithstanding those frequent
 and apparent miracles which he did, which did infinitely
 transcend those of any such pretenders. Such among the
Jews were *Jonathas*, who after the destruction of *Jerusalem*,

as *Josephus* tells us, drew many of the people into the Wilderness of *Cyrene*, *σημεῖα καὶ φάσματα δείξεν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις*, promising to shew them many prodigies and strange appearances. Not long after in the times of *Adrian* appeared that famous blazing-Star *Barchochebas*, who not only portended but brought so much mischief upon the Jews; his pretence was that he vomited flames; and so he did, such as consumed himself and his followers: after him many other Impostors arose in *Egypt*, *Cyprus*, and *Crete*, who all went upon the same pretence of doing Miracles. In latter times the famous Impostor was *David el-David*, whose story is thus briefly reported by *David Ganz*. *David el-David* pretended to be the true *Messias* and rebelled against the King of *Persia*, and did many signs and prodigies before the Jews and the King of *Persia*: at last his head was cut off, and the Jews fined an hundred talents of Gold; In the Epistle of *Rambam* or *R. Moses Maimon*. it is said, that the King of *Persia* desired of him a sign, and he told him that he should cut off his head and he would rise again; (which he cunningly desired to avoid being tormented) which the King was resolved to try, and accordingly executed him; but I suppose his resurrection and *Mahomet's* will be both in a day, although *Maimonides* tells us, some of the Jews are yet such fools as to expect his Resurrection. Several other Impostors *Maimonides* mentions in his Epistle de *Australi regione*. One who pretended to be the *Messias* because he cured himself of the leprosie in a night; several others he mentions in *Spain*, *France*, and other parts, and the issue of them all was only a further aggravation of the miseries and captivities of the poor Jews, who were so credulous in following Impostors, and yet such strange Infidels where there were plain and undoubted miracles to perswade them to believe in our blessed Saviour as the true *Messias*. We freely grant then that many pretended miracles may be done in the world, to deceive men with; but doth it hence follow that either there are no true miracles done in the world, or that there are no certain rules to distinguish the one from the other? But as *Origen* yet further replies to *Celsus*, as a Wolf doth very much resemble a Dog, yet they are not of the same kind; nor

Tzemach David n. 895.

W. ep. Maimon.
in not. Vorstii
ad *Tzem. Dav.*

a turtle Dove and a Pigeon; so that which is produced by a divine power is not of the same Nature with that which is produced by *Magick*; but as he argues, *Is it possible that there should be only deccits in the world and magical operations; and can there be no true miracles at all wrought? Is humane nature only capable of Impostures, or can none work miracles but Devils? Where there is a worse, there may be a better; and so from the Impostures & counterfeits, we may infer that there are true miracles, wrought by a divine power; otherwise it were all one as to say, there are counterfeits, but no Jewels; or there are Sophisms and Paralogismes, but no legitimate demonstrations; if then there be such deccits, there are true miracles too; all the business is βεβαιαν ισχυρις τὸς ἐπαγγελουμένους τὴν δουλειαν ἐξετάζειν*, strictly and severely to examine the pretenders to them, and that from the life and manners of those that do them, and from the effects and consequents of them, whether they do good or hurt in the world, whether they correct mens manners or bring men to goodness, holiness, and truth, and on this account we are neither to reject all miracles, nor imbrace all pretences, but carefully and prudently examine the rational evidences whereby those which are true and divine, may be known from such as are counterfeit and Diabolical.

And this now leads us to the main subject of this Chapter, *Seet. 4.*
viz. What rules we have to proceed by in judging miracles to be true or false; which may be these following.

1.
True Divine miracles are wrought in confirmation of some Divine Testimony. Because we have manifested by all the precedent discourse, that the intention of miracles is to seal some divine Revelation; Therefore if God should work miracles when no Divine Testimony is to be confirmed, God would set the broad Seal of Heaven to a blank. If it be said no, because it will witness to us now the truth of that Testimony which was delivered so many ages since. I answer, 1. The truth of that Testimony was sufficiently sealed at the time of the delivery of it, and is conveyed down in a certain way to us. Is it not sufficient that the Charter of a Corporation had the Princes broad Seal in the time of the giving of it, but that every succession of men in that Corporation must have a new broad Seal, or else they ought to question their Patent?

What

What ground can there be for *that*, when the *original Seal and Patent* is preserved, and is certainly conveyed down from *age to age*? So I say it is as to us, *Gods Grand Charter of Grace and Mercy* to the world through *Jesus Christ*, was sealed by *divine miracles*, at the delivery of it to the world; the *original Patent*, viz. the *Scriptures* wherein the *Charter* is contained, is conveyed in a most certain manner to us; to this *Patent* the *Seal* is annexed, and in it are contained those undoubted *miracles* which were wrought in confirmation of it, so that a new sealing of this *Patent* is wholly needless, unless we had some cause of *suspicion*, that the *Original Patent* it self were lost, or the *first sealing* was not true. If the latter, then *Christian Religion* is not true, if the *Miracles* wrought for confirmation of it were false, because the truth of it depends so much on the *verity* and *Divinity* of the *Miracles* which were then wrought. If the first be suspected, viz. the certain conveyance of the *Patent*, viz. the *Scriptures*, some certain grounds of such a *suspicion* must be discovered in a matter of so great moment, especially when the great and many *Societies* of the *Christian* world do all consent unanimously in the contrary. Nay it is impossible that any rational man can conceive that the *Patent* which we now rely upon, is *supposititious* or *corrupted* in any of those things which are of concernment to the *Christian* world; and that on these accounts.

1. From the watchfulness of *Divine Providence* for the good of mankind. Can we conceive that there is a *God* who rules and takes care of the world, and who to manifest his signal *Love* to mankind, should not only grant a *Patent* of *Mercy* to the world, by his Son *Christ*, and then sealed it by *Divine Miracles*, and in order to the certain conveyance of it to the world, caused it by persons imployed by himself, to be recorded in a language fittest for its dispersing up and down the world (all which I here suppose) Can we I say conceive that this *God* should so far have cast off his care of the world and the good of mankind, which was the original ground of the *Grant* it self, as to suffer any wicked men or malignant spirits to corrupt or alter any or those *Terms* in it, on which mens eternal salvation depends; much less wholly to suppress and

and destroy it, and to send forth one that is counterfeit and suppositions instead of it, and which should not be discovered by the Christians of that age wherein that corrupt Copy was set forth, nor by any of the most learned and inquisitive Christians ever since. They who can give any the least entertainment to so wild, absurd and irrational an imagination, are so far from reason, that they are in good disposition to Atheism; and next to the suspecting the Scriptures to be corrupted, they may rationally suspect there is no such thing as a God and providence in the world; or that the world is governed by a spirit most malignant and envious of the good of mankind. Which is a suspicion only becoming those Heathens (among whom it was very frequent) who worshipped the Devils instead of God.

2. Because of the general dispersion of Copies in the world upon the first publishing of them. We cannot otherwise conceive, but that records containing so weighty and important things, would be transcribed by all those Churches which believed the truth of the things contained in them. We see how far curiosity will carry men as to the care of transcribing ancient MSS. of old Authors, which contain only some history of things past that are of no great concernment to us: Can we then imagine those who ventured estates and lives upon the truth of the things revealed in Scripture, would not be very careful to preserve the authentick instrument whereby they are revealed in a certain way to the whole world? And besides this, for a long time the originals themselves of the Apostolical writings were preserved in the Church; which makes Tertullian in his time appeal to them. *Age jam*

qui volis curiositatem melius exercere in negotio salutis tue; percurre Ecclesias Apostolicas, apud quas ipsa adhuc cathedra Apostolorum suis locis presidentur, apud quas ipsa authentica eorum litera recitantur, sonantes vocem, & representantes faciem uniuscujusque. Now how was it possible that in that time the Scriptures could be corrupted, when in some of the Churches the original writings of the Apostles were preserved in a continual succession of persons from the Apostles themselves, and from these originals so many Copies were transcribed, as were conveyed almost all the world over,

De præscript. adv. heret. cap. 36.

through the large spread of the *Christian Churches* at that time? and therefore it is impossible to conceive that a Copy should be corrupted in one Church, when it would so speedily be discovered by another; especially considering these three circumstances. 1. The innumerable multitude of Copies which would speedily be taken, both considering the moment of the thing, and the easiness of doing it; God, probably for that very end, not loading the world with *Pandects* and Codes of his *Laws*, but contriving the whole instrument of mans salvation in so narrow a compass, that it might be easily preserved, and transcribed by such who were passionate admirers of the *Scriptures*. 2. The great numbers of learned and inquisitive men who soon sprung up in the *Christian Church*; whose great care was to explain and vindicate the sacred *Scriptures*; can we then think that all these Watchmen should be asleep together when the evil one came to sow his Tares, which it is most unreasonable to imagine, when in the writings of all these learned men, which were very many and voluminous, so much of the *Scripture* was inserted, that had there been corruption in the Copies themselves, yet comparing them with those writings, the corruptions would be soon discovered? 3. The great veneration which all *Christians* had of the *Scripture*, that they placed the hopes of their eternal happiness upon the truth of the things contained in the *Scriptures*: Can we then think these would suffer any material alteration to creep into these records without their observing and discovering it? Can we now think when all persons are so exceeding careful of their Deeds, and the Records whereon their estates depend, that the *Christians* who valued not this world in comparison of that to come, should suffer the *Magna Charta* of that to be lost, corrupted, or imbezil'd away? Especially considering what care and industry was used by many *Primitive Christians* to compare Copies together, as is evident in *Pantanus*, who brought the *Hebrew Copy* of *Matthew* out of the *Indies* to *Alexandria*, as *Eusebius* tells us: in *Pamphilus* and the Library he erected at *Casarea*, but especially in *Origens* admirable *Hexapla*, which were mainly intended for this end.

3. It is impossible to conceive a *corruption* of the *copy* of the *Scriptures*, because of the *great differences* which we find all along the several *ages* of the *Church*, between those who acknowledged the *Scriptures* to be *Divine*. So that if one party of them had *foisted in*, or *taken out* any thing, another party was ready to take *notice* of it, and would be *sure* to tell the *world* of it. And this might be one great *reason*, why *God* in his wise *providence* might permit such an *increase* of *heresies* in the *Infancy* of the *Church*, viz. that thereby *Christians* might be forced to *stand upon* their *guard*, and to have a special *eye* to the *Scriptures*, which were always the great *eye sores* of *Hereticks*. And from this great *wariness* of the *Church* it was that some of the *Epistles* were so long *abroad* before they found general *entertainment* in all the *Churches* of *Christ*, because in those *Epistles* which were *doubted* for some time, there were some *passages* which seemed to *favour* some of the *heresies* then *abroad*; but when upon *severe enquiry* they were found to be what they *pretended*, they were received in all the *Christian Churches*.

4. Because of the *agreement* between the *Old Testament* and the *New*: the *Prophecies* of the *Old Testament* appear with their full *accomplishment* in the *New* which we have; so that it is *impossible* to think the *New* should be *corrupted* unless the *Old* were too, which is most *unreasonable* to imagine, when the *Jews*, who have been the great *conservators* of the *Old Testament*, have been all along the most *inveterate enemies* of the *Christians*: So that we cannot at all conceive it possible that any *material corruptions* or *alterations* should *creep* into the *Scriptures*, much less that the true *copy* should be *lost*, and a *new* one *forged*.

Supposing then that we have the same *authenticks records* preserved and handed down to us by the care of all *Christians Churches*, which were written in the *first ages* of the *Church of Christ*: what necessity can we imagine that *God* should work *new miracles* to confirm that *Doctrine* which is conveyed down in a *certain uninterrupted way* to us, as being sealed by *miracles* undoubtedly *divine* in the first *promulgation* and *penning* of it? And this is the first *reason* why the *truth* of the *Scriptures* need not now be sealed by *new*

Sect. 5.

miracles. 2. Another may be because God in the Scripture hath appointed other things to continue in his Church to be as seals to his people of the truth of the things contained in Scriptures. Such are outwardly, the Sacraments of the Gospel, Baptism and the Lords Supper, which are set apart to be as seals to confirm the truth of the Covenant on Gods part towards us in reference to the great promises contained in it, in reference to pardon of sin, and the ground of our acceptance with God by Jesus Christ: and inwardly God hath promised his Spirit to be as a witness within them, that by its working and strengthening grace in the hearts of Believers, it may confirm to them the truth of the records of Scripture when they find the counter-part of them written in their hearts by the finger of the Spirit of God. It cannot then be with any reason at all supposed, that when a Divine testimony is already confirmed by miracles undoubtedly Divine, that new miracles should be wrought in the Church to assure us of the truth of it. So Chrysostom fully expresseth himself concerning miracles, speaking of the first ages of the Christian Church: *καὶ γὰρ καὶ τότε χρησίμως ἐρίνετο, καὶ νῦν χρησίμως ἔρινετο νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ δειῶν θαυμάτων καὶ τοῦ τότε σημείων τῶν πᾶσιν ὧν λέγουσιν περὶ ἡμῶν. Miracles were very useful then, and not at all useful now; for now we manifest the truth of what we speak from the sacred Scriptures, and the miracles wrought in confirmation of them. Which that excellent author there fully manifests in a discourse on this subject, why miracles were necessary in the beginning of the Christian Church, and are not now. To the same purpose St. Austin speaks, where he discourseth of the truth of religion. *Accepimus majores nostros visibilia miracula secutos esse; per quos id actum est ut necessaria non essent posteris; because the world believed by the miracles which were wrought at the first preaching of the Gospel, therefore miracles are no longer necessary. For we cannot conceive how the world should be at first induced to believe without manifest and uncontroled miracles. For as Chrysostom speaks, εἰ σημείων χρεὶς ἔπειταν, πολλῶ μείζον τὸ θαῦμα φαίνει. It were the greatest miracle of all, if the world should believe without miracles. Which the Poet Dantes hath well expressed in the twenty fourth Canto of Paradise. For when the**

Chrysost. in
1 Cor. 2. hom.
8. p. 276. To. 3.
ed. Eton.

De ver. Relig.
cap. 25.

the *Apostle* is there brought in, asking the *Poet* upon what account he took the *Scriptures* of the *Old and New Testament* to be the word of *God*; his answer is,

*Probatio quæ veram hoc mihi recludit,
Sunt opera, quæ secuta sunt, ad quæ Natura
Non candescit ferrum unquam aut percussit incudem.*

i. e. the evidence of that is the divine power of miracles which was in those who delivered these things to the world. And when the *Apostle* catechiseth him further, how he knew those miracles were such as they pretend to be, viz. that they were true and Divine; his answer is,

*Si orbis terræ sese convertit ad Christianismum,
Inquirebam ego, sine miraculis: hoc unum
Est tale, ut reliqua non sint ejus centesima pars.*

i. e. If the world should be converted to the Christian faith without miracles, this would be so great a miracle, that others were not to be compared with it. I conclude this then, with that known saying of *St. Austin*; *Quisquis adhuc prodigia, ut credat, inquiret, magnum est ipse prodigium qui mundo credente non credit.* He that seeks for miracles still to induce him to faith, when the world is converted to the Christian faith, he needs not seek for prodigies abroad; he wants only a looking-glass to discover one. For as he goes on, unde temporibus eruditis & omne quod fieri non potest respuentibus, sine ullis miraculis nimium mirabiliter incredibilia credidit mundis? whence came it to pass that in so learned and wary an age as that was which the *Apostles* preached in, the world without miraculis should be brought to believe things so strangely incredible as those were which *Christ* and his *Apostles* preached? So that by this it appears that the intention of miracles was to confirm a Divine Testimony to the world, and to make that appear credible which otherwise would have seemed incredible; but to what end now, when this Divine Testimony is believed in the world, should miracles be continued among those who believe the Doctrine to be Divine, the miracles

*De Civit. Dei.
l. 22. cap. 8.*

2 Thes. 2. 9,
10.

wrought for the *confirmation* of it to have been *true*, and the *Scriptures* which contain both, to be the *undoubted Word of God*? To what *purpose* then the *huge out cry* of *miracles* in the *Roman Church* is, is hard to *evince*, unless it be to make it appear how *ambitious* that *Church* is of being *called* by the name of him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all *deceivableness* of *unrighteousness* in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. For had they received the *Love* of the *Truth* of the *Gospel*, they would have believed it on the account of those *miracles* and *signs* and *wonders* which were wrought for the *confirmation* of it, by *Christ* and his *Apostles*; and not have gone about by their *jugglings* and *impostures* instead of bringing men to believe the *Gospel*, to make them *question* the *truth* of the *first miracles* when they see so many *counterfeits*; had we not great assurance the *Apostles* were men of other *designs* and *interests* than *Popish Priests* are, and that there is not now any such necessity of *miracles*, as there was then when a *divine testimony* revealing the *truth* of *Christian Religion* was confirmed by them.

Scit. 6.
2.

Those miracles cannot be *Divine*, which are done now for the *confirmation* of any thing contrary to that *Divine testimony*, which is confirmed by uncontroled *Divine miracles*. The case is not the same now, which was before the coming of *Christ*; for then though the *Law of Moses* was confirmed by *miracles*; yet though the doctrine of *Christ* did null the obligation of that *Law*, the *miracles* of *Christ* were to be looked on as *Divine*, because *God* did not intend the *Ceremonial Law* to be perpetual; and there were many *Prophecies* which could not have their accomplishment but under a new state: But now under the *Gospel*, *God* hath declared this to be the last revelation of his mind and will to the world by his Son, that now the *Prophecies* of the old Testament are accomplished, and the *Prophecies* of the New respect only the various conditions of the *Christian Church*, without any the least intimation of any further revelation of *Gods mind* and will to the world: So that now the *Scriptures* are our adequate rule of faith, and that according to which we are to judge all pretenders

pretenders to *inspiration* or *miracles*. And according to this rule we are to proceed in any thing which is propounded to us to believe by any persons, upon any pretences whatsoever. Under the *Law* after the establishment of the *Law* it self by the *miracles* of *Moses*, the rule of judging all pretenders to *miracles*, was by the worship of the true God. If there arise among you a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign, or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake to thee, saying, Let us go after other Gods (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them: thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul. Whereby it is plain, that after the true doctrine is confirmed by divine miracles, God may give the Devil or false Prophets power to work if not real miracles yet such as men cannot judge by the things themselves whether they be real or no; and this God may do for the tryal of mens faith, whether they will forsake the true doctrine confirmed by greater miracles for the sake of such doctrines which are contrary thereto, and are confirmed by false Prophets, by signs and wonders. Now in this case our rule of tryal must not be so much the wonders considered in themselves whether real or no, as the comparing them with the miracles which were wrought in confirmation of that doctrine, which is contrary to this, which these wonders tend to the proving of. Therefore Gods people under the *Law* were to examine the scope and drift of the miracles; if they were intended to bring them to Idolatry, whatever they were, they were not to hearken to those who did them. So now under the *Gospel*, as the worship of the true God was then the standard whereby to judge of miracles by the *Law* of *Moses*, so the worship of the true God through *Jesus Christ*, and by the Doctrine revealed by him, is the standard whereby we ought to judge of all pretenders to work miracles. So that let the miracles be what they will, if they contradict that doctrine which *Christ* revealed to the world, we are to look upon them as only tryals of our faith in *Christ*, to see whether we love him with our whole hearts or no. And therefore I think it needless to examine all the particulars

Deut. 13. 1, 2,
3.

particulars of *Lipsius* his relations of miracles wrought by his *Diva virgo Hallensis* and *Asprecollis*; for if I see, that their intention and scope is to set up the worship of *Demons*, or a middle sort of *Deities* between God and us, which the Scripture is ignorant of, on that very account I am bound to reject them all. Although I think it very possible to find out the difference between true miracles, and them, in the manner and circumstances of their operation; but this, as it is of more curiosity, so of less necessity; for if the doctrine of the Scriptures was confirmed by miracles infinitely above these, I am bound to adhere to that, and not to believe any other doctrine, though an Angel from Heaven should preach it, much less, although some Popish Priests may boast much of miracles to confirm a doctrine opposite to the Gospel: which I know not how far God may in judgement give those images power to work, or others faith to believe, because they would not receive the truth in the love of it: and these are now

2 Thes. 2. 9.

those *τίγματα ψεύδους* lying wonders which the Scripture forewarns us that we should not believe, viz. such as lead men to the belief of lyes, or of doctrines, contrary to that of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Señ. 7.

3.

Where miracles are true and Divine, there the effects which follow them upon the minds of those who believe them, are true and Divine, i. e. the effect of believing of them, is the drawing of men from sin unto God. This the Primitive Christians insisted much upon, as an undoubted evidence that the miracles of Christ were wrought by a Divine power, because the effect which followed them, was the work of conversion of souls from sin and Idols to God and Christ, and all true piety and virtue. As the effect of the miracles of Moses was the drawing a people off from Superstition and Idolatry to the worship of the true God; so the effect which followed the belief of the miracles of Christ in the world was the purging mens souls from all sin and wickedness to make them new creatures, and to live in all exactness and holiness of conversation. And

Lib. 2. c. Cels.

thereby *Origen* discovers the great difference between the miracles of Christ and Antichrist, that the intent of all Antichrists wonders was to bring men εἰς ἀπώρευσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, to the deceivableness of unrighteousness whereby to destroy them; but
the

the intent of the miracles of Christ was ἡ ἀπάτη ἀλλ' ἡ σωτηρία Ψυχῶν, not the deceiving but the saving of souls. τίς γὰρ κρείττονα βίον καὶ συνεκκλοντα τὰ ἑκατέρωθεν ὁσιμέεσσι δὴν τὸ ἔλαττον, εὐλόγως φησὶν ἀπὸ ἀπάτης γίνεσθαι; who can with any probability say that reformation of life and daily progress from evil to good should be the effect of meer deceit? And therefore he saith, Christ told his Disciples that they should do greater works than he had done; because by their Preaching and miracles the eyes of blind souls are opened, and the ears of such as were deaf to all goodness are opened so far as to hearken to the Precepts and promises of the Gospel: and the feet of those who were lame in their inward man, are so healed as to delight to run in the ways of Gods Commandments. Now is it possible that these should be the effects of any evil spirit? But on the contrary we see the effects of all Impostors, and pretended miracles wrought by Diabolical power was to bring men off from God to Sin, and to dissolve that strict obligation to duty which was laid upon men by the Gospel of Christ. Thus it was in that early age of the Apostles, Simon Magus, who far out-went Apollonius Tyanens or any other Heathen in his pretended miracles, according to the report which is given of him by the Primitive Christians; but we see the intent of his miracles was to raise an admiration of himself, and to bring men off from all holiness of conversation, by asserting among other damnable heresies, that God did not at all regard what men did, but only what they believed: wherein the Gnosticks were his followers. Now when miracles are wrought to be Patrons of sin, we may easily know from whom they come.

V. Grot. in
2 Theſ. 2: 9.
in opus.

Those miracles are wrought by a Divine power which tend to the overthrow of the Kingdom of Satan in the world. This is evident from hence, because all such things as are out of mans power to effect, must either be done by a power Divine or Diabolical: For as our Saviour argues, Every Kingdom divided against it self is brought to desolation, and every City or house divided against it self cannot stand; and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how shall then his Kingdome stand? Now Christ by his miracles did not only dispossess Satan out of mens bodies, but out of his Temples too, as hath been shewn already. And besides the Doctrine

Seet. 3.
4.

Mat. 12. 25, 26.

of *Christ* which was confirmed by those *miracles*, was in every thing directly contrary to the *Devils* design in the World. For, 1. The *Devils* design was to conceal himself among those who worshipped him; the design of the Gospel was to discover him whom the *Gentiles* worshipped, to be an evil and malignant spirit, that designed nothing but their ruin. Now it appears in the whole history of *Gentilism*, the grand mystery of State which the Devil used among the *Heathens* was to make himself to be taken and worshipped for God, and to make them believe that their *Demons* were very good and benign spirits; which made the *Platonists* and other *Philosophers* so much incensed against the *Primitive Christians*, when they declared their *Demons* to be nothing else but *Infernal* and wicked spirits which sought the destruction of souls.

2. The *Devils* great design was to draw men to the practice of the greatest wickedness under a pretence of Religion; as is very observable in all the *Heathen* mysteries, which the more recondite and hidden they were, the greater wickedness lay at the bottom of them, and so were to purpose mysteries of iniquity; but now the design of the Gospel was to promote the greatest purity both of heart and life; There being in no other Religion in the world either such incomparable Precepts of holiness, or such encouraging Promises to the practice of it (from eternal life hereafter as the reward, and the assistance of Gods spirit to help men here) or such prevailing motives to persuade men to it, from the love of God in Christ to the World, the undertakings of Christ for us in his death and sufferings, the excellent pattern we have to follow in our Saviours own example; now these things make it plain that the design of Christ and the Devil are diametrically opposite to each other. 3. The design of the Devil is to set God and mankind at the greatest distance from each other; the design of Christ in the Gospel is to bring them nearer together. The Devil first tempts to sin, and then for sin; he makes men presume to sin, and to despair because they have sinned. Christ first keeps men from sin, by his Precepts and Threatnings, and then supposing sin, encourageth them to repent with hopes of pardon procured by himself for all truly penitent and believing

lieving sinners. Thus in every thing the design of Christ and the Devil are contrary, which makes it evident that the miracles wrought in confirmation of the doctrine of Christ could be from no evil spirit, and therefore must be from a truly divine Power.

True and Divine miracles may be known and distinguished from false and diabolical, from the circumstances, or the manner of their operation. There were some peculiar signatures on the miracles of Christ which are not to be found in any wrought by a power less than Divine. Which Arnobius well expresseth in these words to the Heathens. *Potestis aliquem nobis designare, monstrare ex omnibus illis Magis qui unquam fuere per secula, "consimile aliquid Christo millesima ex parte qui fecerit? qui sine ulla vi carminum, sine herbarum aut graminum succis, sine ulla aliqua observatione sollicita sacrorum, libaminum, temporum? ——— Atqui constitit Christum sine ullis adminiculis rerum, sine ullius ritus observatione, vel lege, omnia illa quafecit, nominis sui possibilitate fecisse, & quod proprium, consentaneum, Deo dignum fuerat vero, nihil nocens aut noxium, sed opiferum, sed salutare, sed auxiliariis plenum bonis potestatis munifica liberalitate donasse?* He challengeth the Heathens to produce any one of all their Magicians who did the thousandth part of what our Saviour did: who made use of none of their Magical rites and observations in whatever he did; and whatever he did was meerly by his own power, and was withal most becoming God; and most beneficial to the world. And thence he proceeds to answer the Heathens about the miracles wrought by their Gods, which fell short of those of Christ in three main particulars, the manner of their working, and the number of them, and the quality of the things done.

I. The manner of their working; What they did was with a great deal of pomp and ceremony; what Christ did was with a word speaking. and sometimes without it by the touch of his garment: *non inquirō, non exigo, fāith he, quis Deus, aut quo tempore, cui fuerit auxiliatus, aut quem fractum restituerit sanitati; illud solum audire desidero, an sine ullius adjunctione materia, i. e. medicaminis alicujus ad tactum morbos jusserit ab hominibus evolare, imperaverit, fecerit, &*

Seet. 9.
5.

Arnob. c. gentes
l. 1. pag. 25, 26.
&c.

*emori valetudinum causam, & debiliū corpora ad suas reme-
are naturas. Omitting all other circumstances, name me, saith
he, but which of your Gods ever cured a disease without any ad-
joynd matter, some prescriptions or other ; or which of them
ever commanded diseases out of bodics by their meer touch, and
quite removed the cause of the distempers ? Asculapius, he
says, cured diseases, but in the way that ordinary Physicians
do by prescribing something, or other, to be done by the pa-
tients. Nulla autem virtus est medicaminibus amovere quæ noc-
ant ; beneficia ista rerum, non sunt curantium potestates. To
cure diseases by prescriptions argues no power at all in the prescri-
ber, but vertue in the Medicine.*

2. In the number of the persons cured : they were very
few which were cured in the Heathen Temples ; Christ cured
whole multitudes, and that not in the revestries of the
Temples where fraud and Imposture might be easily suspect-
ed, but in the presence of the people who brought to him all
manner of persons sick of all sorts of diseases, which were
cured by him ; and these so numerous, that the Evangelist
who records many of Christs miracles which had been omit-
ted by the others, yet tells us at last, the miracles of Christ
were so many, that the whole world would not contain them.
But now Arnobius tells the Heathens, *Quid prodest ostendere
unum aut alterum fortasse curatos, cum tot millibus subvene-
rit nemo, & plena sint omnia miserorum infelicitumque delubra ?
what matter is it to shew one or two cured, when thousands lye
continually in the Temples perishing for want of cure ? yea such
as did Asculapium ipsum precibus fatigare, & invitare miserrimi-
s votis, that could not beg a cure of Asculapius with all
their earnestness and importunity.*

3. In the quality of the diseases cured ; the cures among
the Heathens were some slight things in comparison of those
performed by Christ ; the most acute, the most Chronical,
the most malignant of diseases, cured by a touch, a word, a
thought. A learned Physician hath undertaken to make it
evident from the circumstances of the story, and from the
received principles among the most authentick Physicians, that
the diseases cured by our Saviour were all incurable by the
rules of Physick ; if so, the greater the power of our Saviour,
who

John 21. 25.

Gul. Ader. de
morbus Evang.

who cured them with so much facility as he did. And he not only cured all diseases himself, but gave a power to others, who were not at all versed in matters of art and subtilty, that they should do miracles likewise *sine fucis & adminiculis*, without any fraud or assistance: *quid dicitis o memes incredula, difficiles, dura! alicuius mortalium Jupiter ille Capitolinus huiusmodi potestatem dedit?* when did ever the great Jupiter Capitolinus give a power of working miracles to any; I do not say, saith he, of raising the dead, or curing the blind, or healing the lame, *sed ut pustulam, reduriam, populam, aut vocis imperio aut manus contractione comprimeret*: but to cure a wart, a pimple, any the most trivial thing, with a word speaking, or the touch of the hand. Upon this Arnobius challengeth the most famous of all the Heathen Magicians, Zoroastres, Armenius, Pamphilus, Apollonius, Damigero, Dardanus, Velus, Julianus, and Babulus, or any other renowned Magician to give power to any one to make the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, or bring life into a dead body. Or if this be too hard, with all their Magical Rites and Incantations, but to do that, *quod à rusticis Christianis iussionibus factitatum est nudis*, which ordinary Christians do by their meer words: So great a difference was there between the highest that could be done by Magick and the least that was done by the Name and Power of Christ.

Where Miracles are truly Divine, God makes it evident to all Impartial judgements that the things done exceed all created power. For which purpose we are to observe that though Impostures and delusions may go far, the Power of Magicians further when God permits them; yet when God works Miracles to confirm a Divine Testimony he makes it evident that his Power doth infinitely exceed them all. This is most conspicuous, in the case of Moses and our blessed Saviour. First Moses, he began to do some miracles in the Presence of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, turning his rod into a Serpent; but we do not find Pharaoh at all amazed at it, but sends presently for the Magicians to do the same, who did it (whether really or only in appearance, is not material to our purpose) but Aarons rod swallowed up theirs. The next time

Scct. 10.
6.

Ex. 7. 10, 12.

- Ex. 8. 19, 22. *the waters are turned into blood by Moses, the Magicians they do so too. After this, Moses brings up Frogs upon the Land,*
8. 6, 7. *so do the Magicians. So that here now is a plain and open contest in the presence of Pharaoh and his people, between Moses and the Magicians, and they try for victory over each other; so that if Moses do no more than they, they would look upon him but as a Magician; but if Moses do that which by the acknowledgement of these Magicians themselves could be only by Divine Power, then it is demonstrably evident that his Power was as far above the power of Magick as God is above the Devil. Accordingly we find it in the very next miracle in turning the dust into Cinipbes (which we render) lice, the Magicians are non-plust, and give*
2. 19. *out, saying in plain terms, This is the finger of God. And what greater acknowledgement can there be of Divine Power than the confession of those who seemed to contest with it, and to imitate it as much as possible? After this we find not the Magicians offering to contest with Moses, and in the plague of boyles we particularly read that they could not stand before*
9. 11. *Moses. Thus we see in the case of Moses how evident it was that there was a power above all power of Magick which did appear in Moses. And so likewise in the case of our blessed Saviour; for although Simon Magus, Apollonius, or others, might do some small things, or make some great shew and noyse by what they did; yet none of them ever came near the doing things of the same kind which our Saviour did, curing the born blind, restoring the dead to life after four days, and so as to live a considerable time after; or in the manner he did them, with a word, a touch, with that frequency and openness before his greatest enemies as well as followers, and in such an uncontrouled manner, that neither Jews or Heathens, ever questioned the truth of them. And after all these, when he was laid in the grave after his crucifixion, exactly according to his own prediction, he rose again the third day, appeared frequently among his Disciples for forty days together. After which, in their presence, he ascended up to Heaven, and soon after, made good his promise to them, by sending his Holy Spirit upon them, by which they spake with tongues, wrought miracles, went up and down*
Preaching

Preaching the Gospel of Christ with great boldness, cheerfulness, and constancy, and after undergoing a great deal of hardship in it, they sealed the truth of all they spake with their blood, laying down their lives to give witness to it. Thus abundantly to the satisfaction of the minds of all good men hath God given the highest rational evidence of the truth of the Doctrine which he hath revealed to the World. And thus I have finished the second part of my task, which concerned the rational evidence of the truth of Divine Revelation from the persons who were employed to deliver Gods mind to the World: And therein have, I hope, made it evident that both Moses and the Prophets, our Saviour and his Apostles, did come with sufficient rational evidence to convince the world that they were persons immediately sent from God.



BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

Of the Being of God.

The Principles of all Religion lie in the Being of God and immortality of the soul: from them the necessity of a particular Divine revelation rationally deduced; the method laid down for proving the Divine authority of the Scriptures. Why Moses doth not prove the Being of God, but suppose it. The notion of a Deity very consonant to reason. Of the nature of Idea's, and particularly of the Idea of God. How we can form an Idea of an infinite Being. How far such an Idea argues existence. The great unreasonableness of Atheism demonstrated. Of the Hypotheses of the Aristotelian and Epicurean Atheists. The Atheists pretences examined and refuted. Of the nature of the arguments whereby we prove there is a God. Of universal consent and the evidence of that to prove a Deity and immortality of souls. Of necessity of existence implied in the notion of God, and how far that proves the Being of God. The order of the world and usefulness of the parts of it, and especially of mans body, an argument of a Deity. Some higher principle proved to be in the world than matter and motion. The nature of the soul, and possibility of its subsisting after death. Strange appearances in nature not solvable by the power of imagination.

Sect. 1.

HAVING in the precedent Book largely given a rational account of the grounds of our faith, as to the persons whom God employes to reveal his mind to the world; if we can now make it appear that those sacred records which

which we embrace as *divinely inspired*, contain in them nothing *unworthy* of *so great a name*, or *unbecoming persons* sent from *God* to *deliver*; there will be nothing wanting to justify our *Religion* in point of *reason* to be *true*, and of *revelation* to be *divine*. For the *Scriptures themselves* coming to us in the name of *God*, we are bound to *believe* them to be such as they pretend to be, unless we have ground to *question* the general foundations of all religion as *uncertain*, or this particular way of religion as not *suitable* to those general foundations. The foundations of all religion lye in two things; that there is a *God* who rules the world, and that the souls of men are capable of *subsisting* after death; for he that comes unto *God*, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him; so that if these things be not supposed as most agreeable to *humane reason*, we cannot imagine upon what grounds mankind should embrace any way of religion at all. For if there be not a *God* whom I am to serve and obey, and if I have not a soul of an *immortal* nature, there can be no sufficient obligation to religion, nor motive inducing to it: For all obligation to obedience must suppose the existence of such a *Being* which hath power to command me; and by reason of the promiscuous scatterings of good and evil in this life, the motives engaging men to the practice of religion, must suppose the certainty of a future state. If these things be sure, and the foundations of religion in general thereby firmly established, it will presently follow as a matter most agreeable to reason, that the *God* whom we are to serve should himself prescribe the way of his own worship; and if the right of donation of that happiness which mens souls are capable of be alone in himself, that he alone should declare the terms on which it may be expected; For man being a creature endued with a free principle of acting, which he is conscious to himself of, and therefore not being carried to his end by necessity of nature or external violence, without the concurrence of his own reason and choice, we must suppose this happiness to depend upon the performance of some conditions on mans part, whereby he may demonstrate that it is the matter of his free choice, and that he freely quits all other interests that he might obtain the enjoyment of it.

Heb. 11. 6.

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Which conditions to be performed, being expressions of mans obedience towards God as his Creator and Governour, and of his gratitude for the tenders of so great a happiness which is the free gift of his Maker, we cannot suppose any one to have power to prescribe these conditions, but he that hath power likewise to deprive the soul of her happiness upon non-performance, and that must be God himself. But in order to mans understanding his duty, and his obligation to obedience, it is necessary that these conditions must not be locked up in the Cabinet Council of Heaven, but must be so far declared and revealed, that he may be fully acquainted with those terms which his happiness depends upon; else his neglect of them would be excusable, and his misery unavoidable. Had man indeed remained without offending his Maker, he might still have stood in his favour upon the general terms of obedience due from the creature to his Creator, and to all such particular precepts which should bear the impress of his Makers will upon them, besides which, the whole volume of the Creation without, and his own reason within would have been sufficient directors to him in the performance of his duty. But he abusing his liberty, and being thereby guilty of Apostasy from God (as is evident by a continued propensity to sin, and the strangeness between God and the souls of men) a particular revelation is now become necessary, that mankind may thereby understand on what terms God will be pleased again, and by what means they may be restored into his favour. And lastly, it not agreeing with the free and communicative nature of Divine goodness (which was the first original of the worlds Creation) to suffer all mankind to perish in their own folly, we must suppose this way for mans recovery to be somewhere prescribed, and the revelation of it to be somewhere extant in the world. So that from the general principles of the existence of God, and immortality of the soul, we have deduced by clear and evident reason the necessity of some particular Divine revelation, as the Standard and measure of Religion. And according to these principles we must examine what ever pretends to be of Divine revelation; for it must be suitable to that Divine nature from whom it is supposed to come, and it must be agree-

able.

able to the conditions of the souls of men; and therefore that which carries with it the greatest evidence of *Divine revelation*, is, a faithful representation of the State of the case between God and the souls of men, and a *Divine discovery* of those ways whereby mens souls may be fitted for eternal happiness. A *Divine revelation* then must be faithful and true in all its narrations; it must be excellent and becoming God in all its discoveries. And therefore all that can with any reason be desired for proof of the *Divine authority* of the Scriptures, will lye in these three things. First, That the foundations of religion are of undoubted certainty, or that there is a God, and that mens souls are immortal. Secondly, That the Scriptures do most faithfully relate the matters of greatest antiquity therein contained (which do most concern the History of the breach between God and man.) Thirdly, That the Scriptures are the only authentick records of those terms on which happiness may be expected in another world.

I begin with the first of them, which concerns the existence of God, and immortality of the soul; both which seem to be supposed as general Prolepses in the writings of Moses, and as things so consonant to humane nature, that none to whom his writings should come could be supposed to question them. And therefore he spends no time in the needless proving of either of these, knowing to how little purpose his writings would be to such who denied these first principles of all Religion. But beside this, there may be these accounts given, why these main foundations of all religion are no more insisted on in the first Books of the Scripture, which contain the originals of the world. First, Because these were in the time of the writing of them, believed with an universal consent of mankind. In those more early daies of the world, when the tradition of the first ages of it was more fresh and entire, it is scarce imaginable that men should question the Being of a God, when the history of the flood, and the propagation of the world after it by the Sons of Noah, and the burning of Sodom and Gomorrha were so fresh in their memories, as having been done so few Generations before them. And by what remains of any history of other Nations in those elder times men were

Señ. 2.

so far from *Atheism*, that *Polytheism* and *Idolatry* were the common practice of the world, as is most evident in all relations of the antient *Chaldeans*, *Egyptians*, *Phenicians*, and other Nations, who all supposed these two principles, as well as those who served the true God. And in all probability, as men are apt to run from one extrem to another; *Polytheism* was the first occasion of *Atheism*, and *Idolatry* of *irreligion*. And thence we find the first appearance of *Atheists* to be in the most blind and superstitious age of Greece, when the obscene Poets had so debauched the common understandings of the people, as to make them believe such things concerning their Gods, which were so incongruous to humane nature, that all who had any sense of goodness left, could not but loath and abhor such *Deities*. And therefore we find all the flouts and jeers of the reputed *Atheists* among them, such as *Dionysius*, *Diagoras*, *Theodorus*, *Euhemerus*, *Messenius* and others, were cast upon their venerable *Deities*, which they so solemnly worshipped, who had been before as *Euhemerus* plainly told them, poor mortal men, and those not of the best reputation neither: and therefore as the *Epicurean* in Tully well says, *omnis eorum cultus esset in luctu*, the most suitable devotion for them had been lamenting their death. Now when these common *Deities* were so much derided by intelligent men, and yet the order of the world seemed to tell them there was really a God, though those were none; those who had *Philosophical* wits, such as *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, set themselves to work to see if they could solve the *Phenomena* of nature without a *Deity*; and therefore asserted the origin of the universe to be only by a fortuitous concurrence of infinite little particles; but herein they befooled themselves and their greedy followers, who were glad to be rid of those anxieties of mind which the thoughts of a *Deity* and an immortal soul did cause within them. And although *Lucretius* in a bravado tells us of his Master, that when mens minds were sunk under the burden of Religion,

De nat. Deor.
l. 1. cap. 38.

*Humana ante oculos fœdè cùm vita jaceret
In terris oppressa gravi sub religione :
Primum Graius homo mortalis tollere contrâ
Est oculos ausus, primusque obistere contrâ.*

*De verum Nat.
lib. I.*

that Epicurus was the first true Gyant who durst encounter the Gods, and if we believe him, overthrew them in open field;

*Quare religio pedibus subjecta vicissim
Obteritur, nos exaquat victoria cœlo.*

Yet Cotta in Tully reports the issue of this battle quite otherwise; for although the greatest triumph in this victory had been onely to become like the beasts that perish; yet if we believe Cotta, Epicurus was so far from gaining any of his beloved ease and pleasure by his sentiments, that never was School-boy more afraid of a Rod, nor did any enemy more dread a Conqueror, than Epicurus did the thoughts of a God and death. *Nec quenquam vidi qui magis ea quæ timenda esse negaret, timeret; mortem dico & Deos.* So hard it is for an Epicurean even after he hath prostituted his conscience, to silence it; but (what-ever there be in the air) there is an Elastic power in conscience that will bear its self up notwithstanding the weight that is laid upon it. And yet after all the labours of Epicurus, he knew it was to no purpose to endeavour to root out wholly the belief of a Deity out of the world, because of the unanimous consent of the world in it; and therefore he admits of it as a necessary Prolepsis or Anticipation of humane nature, *quod in omnium animis deorum notionem impressisset ipsa natura*, that nature its self had stamped an Idea of God upon the minds of men; *cum enim non instituto aliquo, aut more aut lege sit opinio constituta, manet atque ad unum omnium firma consensus, intelligi necesse est Deos esse, quoniam insitas eorum, vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus; de quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est,* as Velleius the Epicurean argues. Since the belief of a Deity, neither rises from custom nor was enacted by Law; yet is unanimously assented to by all man-

*De Nat. Deor.
lib. I. cap. 86.*

*De Nat. Deor.
lib. I. cap. 44.*

kind; it necessarily follows that there must be a *Deity*, because the *Idea* of it is so *natural* to us. If it were thus acknowledged in the *Philosophical* age of *Greece*, when men bent their wits to unsettle the *Belief* of such things as tended to *Religion*; how much more might it be esteemed a general principle of humane nature in those elder times, when not so much as one *dissenter* appeared that we read of among the more ancient Nations? But *Secondly*, it was less needful for *Moses* to insist much on the proof of a *Deity* in his writings, when his very employment, and the *history* he wrote, was the greatest evidence that there was one. Could any of them question, whether there were a *God*, or no, who had heard his voice at mount *Sinai*, and had received a *Law* from him, who had been present at so many *miracles* which were done by *Moses* in *Egypt* and the *Wilderness*? What more evident demonstration of *God* could be desired, than those many unparallel'd *miracles*, which were wrought among them? And those who would not be convinced by them that there was a *God*, would certainly be convinced by nothing. *Thirdly*, It was unsuitable to the purpose of *Moses* to go about to prove any thing he delivered by the meer force of humane reason, because he writ as a person employed by *God*; and therefore by the *Arguments* on which they were to believe his *Testimony* in whatever he writ, they could not but believe there was a *God* that employed him. And from hence it is that *Moses* with so much *Majesty* and *Authority* begins the *History* of the *Creation*, with, *In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth*. There could be no greater evidence that there was an infinitely wise, good, and powerful *God*, than that the *universe* was produced out of *nothing* by him, and what reason could there be to distrust his *Testimony* who relates it, who manifested not only that there was a *God*, but that he was employed by him, by the *miracles* which he wrought: so that all our former discourse concerning the evidences of *Divine* revelation, are a most palpable demonstration of a *Deity*; for if there be such a power which can alter the course of nature when he please, the *Being* wherein it is, must needs be infinite; which is the same which we mean by *God*.

But

But yet for those whose *minds* are so coy and squeamish as *Sett. 3.* to any thing of *Divine revelation*, we want not sufficient evidence in point of *reason* to prove to them the *existence* of a *Deity*. In order to which, I shall clear these following propositions.

1. *That the true notion of a Deity is most agreeable to the faculties of mens souls, and most consonant to reason and the light of nature.*

2. *That those who will not believe that there is a God, do believe other things on far less reason, and must by their own principles deny some things which are apparently true.*

3. *That we have as certain evidence that there is a God, as it is possible for us to have, considering his nature.*

That the true notion of God is most agreeable to the faculties of mens souls, and most consonant to reason and the light of nature: i. e. that the *Idea* of God (or that which we conceive in our minds when we think of God) is so far from being any ways repugnant to any principle of reason within us, that it is hard to pitch on any other notion which hath fewer entanglements in it, to a mind so far *Metaphysical* as to abstract from sense and prejudice. I grant it very difficult, nay impossible, for those to have any true settled notion of a God, who search for an *Idea* of him in their fancies, and were never conscious to themselves of any higher faculty in their souls than *meccrimagination*. Such may have *imaginem Fovis*, or *galeata Minerva*, as he in Tully speaks, some *Idea* of an *Idol* in their minds, but none of a true God. For we may as soon come by the sight of colours to understand the nature of sounds, as by any corporal phantasms come to have a true *Idea* of God. And although sometimes an *Idea* be taken for that impression of things which is lodged in the *Phantasie*, yet here we take it in a more general sense, as it contains the representation of any thing in the mind; as it is commonly said in the Schools that the *Divine Intellect* doth understand things by their *Idea's* which are nothing else but the things themselves as they are objectively represented to the understanding. So that an *Idea* in its general sense in which we take it, is nothing else but the objective being of a thing as it terminates the understanding, and is the form of
the

the act of *Intellection*: that which is then immediately represented to the mind in its perception of things, is the *Idea* or notion of it. Now such an *Idea* as this is, may be either *true* or *false*. For better understanding of which we must consider that an *Idea* in the soul may be considered two ways.

1. As it is a mode of *cogitation*, or the act of the soul apprehending an object; now this way no *Idea* can be false; for as it is an act of the mind, every *Idea* hath its truth: for whether I imagine a golden mountain, or another, it matters not here; for the one *Idea* is as true as the other, considering it merely as an act of the mind. For the mind is as really employed about the one as the other; as the will is about an object whether it be feasible or no.
2. The *Idea* may be considered in regard of its objective reality, or as it represents some outward Object; now the truth or falsehood of the *Idea* lies in the understanding passing judgement concerning the outward object, as existent, which doth correspond to the *Idea* which is in the mind. And the proneness of the understandings error in this case ariseth from the different nature of those things which are represented to the mind; for some of them are general and abstracted things, and do not at all suppose existence, as the nature of truth, of a Being, of cogitation; other *Idea*'s depend upon existence supposed, as the *Idea* of the Sun, which I apprehend in my mind because I have seen it; but besides these, there are other *Idea*'s in the mind, which the understanding forms within it self by its own power, as it is a principle of cogitation; such are those which are called *entia rationis*, and have no other existence at all but only in the understanding, as *Chimera*'s, *Centaures*, &c. Now as to these, we are to observe, that although the composition of these things together by the understanding, be that which makes these *Idea*'s to be only fictitious, yet the understanding would not be able to compound such things, were they not severally represented to the mind; as unless we had known what a horse and a man had been, our minds could not have conjoined them together in its apprehension. So that in these which are the most fictitious *Idea*'s we see, that although the *Idea* it self be a meer creature of the understanding, yet the mind could not form such an *Idea* but upon pre-

existent

existent matter, and some *objective reality* must be supposed in order to the *intellectual conception* of these *Anomalous entities*. By which we see that that strange kind of *omnipotency* which some have attributed to the *understanding*, lies not in a *Power* of conceiving things wholly *impossible*, or fancying *Idea's* of absolute *non entities*, but in a kind of *African Copulation* of such *species* of things together, which in *Nature* seem wholly *impossible*, (as the *Schools* speak) or have no *congruity* at all in the *order* of the *Universe*. So that had there never been any such *things* in the *World* as *matter* and *motion*, it is very hard to conceive, how the *understanding* could have formed within it self the *variety* of the *species* of such things, which are the *results* of those two grand *principles* of the *Universe*. But because it is so *impossible* for minds not very *contemplative* and *Metaphysical* to *abstract* from *matter*, thence it is we are apt to *imagine* such a *Power* in the *understanding*, whereby it may form *Idea's* of such things which have no *objective reality* at all. I grant those we call *entia rationis* have no *external reality* as they are *such*; but yet I say, the *existence* of *matter* in the *world*, and the *corporeal Phantasms* of *outward beings*, are the *foundation* of the *souls conception* of those *entities*, which have no *existence* beyond the *humane Intellect*.

The great enquiry then is, how far this *Plastick Power* of *Sect. 4.* the *understanding*, may extend it self in its *forming* an *Idea* of *God*. That there is such a *one* in the minds of men, is evident to every one that *consults* his own *faculties*, and enquires of them, whether they cannot apprehend a *settled* and *consistent notion* of a *Being* which is *absolutely perfect*. For that is all we understand by the *Idea* of *God*; not that there is any such *connate Idea* in the *Soul*, in the sense which *connate Idea's* are commonly understood; but that there is a *faculty* in the *Soul*, whereby upon the free use of *reason*, it can form within it self a *settled notion* of such a *Being*, which is as *perfect* as it is *possible* for us to conceive a *Being* to be. If any difficulty be made concerning the *forming* such a *notion* in ones mind, let the person who scruples it, only *enquire* of himself, whether he *judges* all *Beings* in the *world* equal; whether a *mushrome* hath in it all the *perfections* which *man* hath?

hath? which I suppose *none*, who have a mind within them, can question. If then it be granted that man hath some *perfections* in him above *inferiour creatures*, it will be no matter of difficulty to shew wherein *man* exceeds other *inferiour Beings*. For is not *life* a greater *perfection* than the want of it? is not *reason* and *knowledge*, a *perfection* above *sense*? and so let us proceed to those things, wherein one *man* differs from another; for it is evident, that all *men* are not of *equal accomplishments*; is not then *forecast* and *prudence* above *incogitancy* and *folly*? is not the *knowledge* of *causes* of things, better than *stupidity* and *ignorance*? is not *beneficence* and *liberality* more noble than *parsimony* and *narrowness* of *spirit*? is not true *goodness* far above *debauchery* and *intemperance*? and are not all these far better, when they are joyned with such a *power* as hath no *limits* or *bounds* at all? Now then is it not possible for a mans *mind*, proceeding in its ordinary way of *intellection*, to form a *notion* of such a *Being*, which hath *wisdom*, *goodness* and *power* in it, without any *limits* and *bounds* at all, or any of those *abatements*, which any of these *perfections* are found with in *man*? For it is unconceivable, that the *mind* of *man* can attribute to it self *absolute perfection*, when it cannot but see its own *defects* in those *things* it excells other *creatures* in; and supposing it had *power*, *goodness* and *knowledge* far above what it hath; yet it cannot but say, that these *perfections* would be greater if it were *alwaies* possessed of them, and it were *impossible* that it should ever cease to be, or not have been. So that now joyning *infinite goodness*, *wisdom*, and *power*, with *eternity* and *necessity* of *existence*, the result is the notion of a *Being absolutely perfect*. So that now whoever questions the *suitableness* of such a *notion* or *Idea* to the *faculties* of mens *souls*, must question the *truth* of his own *faculties*, and the *method* they proceed in, in their clearest *conceptions* and *ratiocinations*. And the *mind* of *man* may as well question the *truth* of any *Idea* it hath within it self, as of this we now discourse of. Nay it may be far sooner puzzled in any of those *Idea's* which are *transmitted* into the *Phantasie* by the *impressions* of *Corporeal Beings* upon the *Organs* of *sense*, than in this more *intellectual* and *abstracted*

abstracted Idea, which depends wholly upon the mind.

All the difficulty now is, whether this *Idea* of such an *absolutely perfect Being*, be any thing else but the understandings *Plastick power*, whereby it can unite all these *perfections* together in one *conception*, or doth it necessarily imply, that there must be such a *Being* really *existent*, or else I could never have formed such a settled *notion* of him in my mind? Sect. 5.

To this I answer, 1. It is as much as I desire at present, that the *forming* of such an *Idea* in the *mind*, is as *suitable* and *agreeable* to our *faculties*, as the *forming* the *conception* of any other *Being* in the *world*. For hereby it is most evident that the *notion* of a *God* imports nothing *incongruous* to *reason*, or *repugnant* to the *faculties* of our *souls*; but that the *mind* will form as settled and clear a *notion* of *God*, as of any thing which in the judgement of *Epicurus*, his infallible *senses* did the most assure him of. So that there can be no shadow of a *pretence*, why any should reject the *Being* of a *God*, because of the *impossibility* to conceive any such *Being* as *God* is. If to this it be objected, that such things are implied in this *Idea*, which make it *unconceivable*, in that all the *perfections* in this *Being* are supposed to be *infinite*, and *infinity* transcends our capacity of apprehension; To this I answer,

1. That those who deny *infinity* in *God*, must necessarily attribute it to something else, as to *infinite space*, *infinity* of *successions* of *ages* and *persons*, if the *World* were *eternal*; and therefore it is most *unreasonable* to reject any *notion* for that, which it is impossible, but if I deny that, I must attribute it to something else, to whose *Idea* it is far less proper than it is to *Gods*. 2. Lest I should rather seek to avoid the *argument* than to satisfy it, I say, that though *infinite* as *infinite* cannot be comprehended, yet we may clearly and distinctly apprehend a *Being* to be of that *Nature*, that no *limits* can be assigned to it, as to its *Power* or *Presence*; which is as much as to understand it to be *infinite*. The *ratio formalis* of *infinity* may not be understood clearly and distinctly, but yet the *Being* which is *infinite* may be. *Infinity* it self cannot be on this account, because however *positive* we apprehend it, yet we always apprehend it in a *negative* way, because we conceive it by *denying* all *limitations* and

bounds to it ; but the *Being* which is *infinite* we apprehend in a *positive* manner, although not *adequately*, because we cannot comprehend all which is in it. As we may clearly and distinctly see the *Sea*, though we cannot discover the bounds of it ; so may we clearly and distinctly apprehend some *Perfections* of *God* when we fix our minds on them, although we are not able to grasp them all together in our narrow and confined intellects, because they are *Infinite*. Thus we see that *Gods Infinity* doth not at all abate the *clearness* and *distinctness* of the notion, which we have of *God* ; so that though the *Perfections* of *God* are without bounds or limits, yet it bears no repugnancy at all to mens natural faculties, to have a settled *Idea* of a *Being* *Ininitely* perfect in their minds.

Sect. 6.

To the *Question* I answer, It seems highly probable and far more consonant to reason than the contrary, that this *Idea* of *God* upon the mind of man, is no meerly fictitious *Idea*, but that it is really imprinted there by that *God* whose *Idea* it is, and therefore doth suppose a reality in the thing correspondent to that *objective reality* which is in the understanding. For although I am not so well satisfied that the meer *objective reality* of the *Idea* of *God* doth exceed the efficiency of the mind, as that *Idea* is nakedly considered in it self, because of the unlimited power of the understanding in conception: Yet I say, considering that *Idea* in all the circumstances of it, it seems highly probable that it is no meer *ens rationis*, or figment of the understanding ; and that will appear on these considerations. 1. This *Idea* is of such a Nature as could not be formed from the understandings consideration of any corporeal Phantasms. Because what ever hath any thing of matter in it, involves of necessity many imperfections along with it ; for every part of matter is divisible into more parts. Now it is a thing evident to natural light, that it is a greater perfection not to be divisible than to be so. Besides, corporeal Phantasms are so far from helping us in forming this *Idea*, that they alone hinder us from a distinct conception of it, while we attend to them ; because these bear no proportion at all to such a being. So that this *Idea* however must be a pure act of *Intellection*, and therefore supposing there were no other facul-

ry in man but *imagination*, it would bear the greatest *repugnancy* to our *conceptions*, and it would be according to the principles of *Epicurus* and some modern *Philosophers*, a thing wholly *impossible* to form an *Idea* of *God*, unless with *Epicurus* we imagine him to be *corporeal*, which is to say, he is no *God*. Which was the reason that *Tully* said, *Epicurus* did only *nomine ponere, re tollere Deos*, because such a notion of *God* is repugnant to natural light. So that if this *Idea* doth wholly abstract from *corporeal Phantasms*; it thereby appears that there is a higher *faculty* in mans *Soul* than meer *imagination*, and it is hardly conceivable whence a *faculty* which thus extends it self to an *infinite Object*, should come, but from an *infinite Being*: especially if we consider, 2. That the *understanding* in forming this *Idea* of *God*, doth not by distinct *acts*, first collect one *perfection*, and then another, and at last unite these together, but the *simplicity* and *unity* of all these *perfections* is as necessarily conceived as any of them. Granting then that the *understanding* by the observing of several *perfections* in the world, might be able to abstract these severally from each *Being* wherein they were, yet whence should the *Idea* of the *unity* and *inseparability* of all these *perfections* come? The mind may, it is true, knit some things together in *fictitious Idea's*, but then those are so far from *unity*, with each other, that in themselves they speak mutual *repugnancy* to one another, which makes them proper *entia rationis*; but these several *perfections* are so far from speaking *repugnancy* to each other, that the *unity* and *inseparability* of them is as necessary to the forming of this *Idea*, as any other *perfection* whatsoever. So that from hence it appears that the consideration of the *perfections* which are in the *Creatures*, is only an occasion given to the mind to help it in its *Idea* of *God*, and not that the *Idea* it self depends upon those *perfections* as the *causes* of it; as in the clearest *Mathematical truths* the manner of *demonstration* may be necessary to help the *understanding* to its clearer *assent*, though the things in themselves be undoubtedly true. For all minds are not equally capable of the same *truths*; some are of quicker *apprehension* than others are; nor although to slower *apprehensions* a more particular way of *demon-*

strating things be necessary, yet the *truths* in themselves are equal, though they have not equal evidence to several persons.

3. It appears that this is no meer *fictitious Idea* from the uniformity of it in all persons who have freed themselves from the entanglements of corporeal phantasms. Those we call *entia rationis*, we find by experience in our minds, that they are formed *ad placitum*; we may imagine them as many ways as we please; but we see it is quite otherwise in this *Idea of God*; for in those attributes or perfections which by the light of Nature we attribute to God, there is an uniform consent in all those who have divested their minds of corporeal Phantasms in their conceptions of God. For while men have agreed that the object of their *Idea* is a being absolutely perfect, there hath been no dissent in the perfections which have been attributed to it; none have questioned but infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, joyned with necessity of existence, have been all implied in this *Idea*. So that it is scarce possible to instance in any one *Idea*, no not of those things which are most obvious to our senses, wherein there hath been so great an uniformity of mens conceptions as in this *Idea of God*. And the most gross corporeal *Idea* of the most sensible matter hath been more lyable to heats and disputes among Philosophers, than this *Idea* of a being infinite, and purely spiritual. Which strongly proves my present proposition, that this *Idea of God* is very consonant to Natural light; for it is hardly conceivable that there should be so universal a consent of minds in this *Idea*, were it not a natural result from the free use of our reason and faculties. And that which adds further weight to this argument, is, that although Infinity be so necessarily implied in this *Idea of God*, yet men do not attribute all kind of Infinite things to God; for there being conceivable Infinite number, Infinite longitude, as well as Infinite Power and knowledge, our minds readily attribute the latter to God, and as readily abstract the other from his nature, which is an argument this *Idea* is not fictitious, but argues reality in the thing correspondent to our conception of it. So much may suffice to clear the first proposition, viz. that the notion of a God is very suitable to the faculties

faculties of mens souls, and to that light of Nature which they proceed by in forming the conceptions of things.

Those who deny that there is a God, do assert other things *Sect. 7.*
on far less evidence of reason, and must by their own principles *Prop. 2.*
deny some things which are apparently true. One would expect
that such Persons who are apt to condemn the whole World
of folly in believing the truth of Religion, and would fain
be admired as men of a deeper reach, and greater wit and
sagacity than others, would when they have exploded a Deity,
at least give us some more rational and consistent account of
things, than we can give that there is a God. But on the con-
trary we find the reasons on which they reject a Deity so la-
mentably weak, and so easily retorted upon themselves, and
the hypotheses they substitute in stead of a Deity so precarious,
obscure and uncertain, that we need no other argument to
evince the reasonableness of Religion, than from the manifest
folly as well as impiety of those who oppose it. Which we
shall make evident by these two things. 1. That while they
deny a Deity, they assert other things on far less reason. 2. That
by those principles on which they deny a Deity, they must deny some
things which are apparently true.

1. That they assert some things on far less reason than we do
that there is a God. For if there be not an infinitely powerful
God who produced the world out of nothing, it must ne-
cessarily follow according to the different principles of the
Aristotelian, and *Epicurean Atheists*, that either the world
was as it is from all eternity, or else that it was at first made
by the fortuitous concurrence of *Atoms*. Now I appeal to the
reason of any Person, who hath the free use of it, Whether
either of these two *Hypotheses*, urged with the same or great-
er difficulties, &c. be not far more weakly proved, than the
existence of a Deity is, or the production of the world by
him.

1. They run themselves into the same difficulties which they
would avoid in the belief of a Deity; and nothing can be a
greater evidence of an intangled mind than this is: To deny
a thing because of some difficulty in it, and instead of it to
assert another thing which is chargeable with the very same
difficulty in a higher degree. Thus when they reject a Deity,
because

because they cannot understand what *infinity* means; both these *Hypotheses* are lyable to the same intricacy in apprehending the nature of something *Infinite*. For according to the *Epicureans*, there must be an *Infinite space*, and what greater ease to the mind is there in conceiving an *Idea* of that than of an *Infinite Being*? And if the world be *eternal*, there must have been past an *Infinite succession* of *ages*, and is not the understanding as easily lost in this, as in an *eternal Being* which created the world? For if the *Course of Generations* in the World had no *beginning* at all, (which necessarily follows upon the *eternity* of the world) then an *infinite number* of *successions* are already *past*, and if *past* then at an *end*, and so we find an *infinite* which hath had an *end*, which is a *consequence*, becoming one who avoids the belief of a *Deity*, because *Infinity* is an *unconceivable* thing. Besides, if the *number* of *Generations* hath been *Infinite*; these two *consequences* will unavoidably follow, which the reason of any one but an *Atheist* would startle at, that one *Infinite* may be greater than another, and that the *part* is equal to the *whole*. For let him fix where he please, in the *course* of *Generations*, I demand whether in the *great Grand-fathers* time the *succession* of *Generations* was *finite* or *Infinite*; if *finite*, then it had a *beginning*; and so the world not *eternal*; if *infinite*, then I ask, Whether there were not a longer *succession* of *Generations* in the time of his *great Grand-children*, and so there must be a *number* greater than that which was *infinite*; for the former *succession* was *infinite*, and this hath more *Generations* in it than that had; but if it be said that they were *equal*, because both *infinite*, then the *succession* of *Generations* to the *Grand-father*, being but a part of that which extends to his *Grand-children* and *posterity*, the *part* is equal to the *whole*. And is not now the notion of an *Infinite Being* enough to stumble an *Atheist's* reason, when it can so nimbly leap over so apparent contradictions? I insist not on this as an evident *demonstration* to prove a *Deity*, which possibly it may not amount to, because it may only *demonstrate* the impossibility of our understandings comprehending the nature of *Infinity*. But however it doth most evidently *demonstrate* the folly and unreasonableness of the *Atheist* who rejects

rejects the *Being* of *God* on the account of his *Infinity*, when his understanding is more lost in apprehending an *infinite* succession of *Generations* which follows from his supposition of the *eternity* of the world. If then it be impossible, as it is, upon any principles whatsoever, to avoid the conception of somewhat *infinite* and *eternal*, either *matter* or *space*, or some *Being*, let any one appeal to his own reason whether it be not more agreeable to that, to attribute these *perfections* to such a *Being*, to whose *Idea* they necessarily belong, than to attribute them to this world in whose conception they are not at all implied; but on the contrary they do far more puzzle our understandings than when we conceive them to be in *God*. If somewhat must have a continued duration, and be of an *unbounded nature*, how much more rational is it to conceive *wisdom*, *power*, and *goodness* to be conjoined with *eternity* and *infinity*, than to bestow these attributes upon an empty *space*, or upon dull and unactive *matter*? It cannot be reason then, but some more base and unworthy principle which makes the *Atheist* question the *Being* of *God*, because his *perfections* are *unconceivable*, when according to his own principles the most puzzling attributes of *God* return upon him with more force and violence, and that in a more inexplicable manner.

As the *Atheist* must admit those things himself which he rejects the *Being* of *God* for; so he admits them upon far weaker grounds than we do attribute them to *God*. If any thing may be made evident to mans natural reason concerning the existence of a *Being* so infinite as *God* is, we doubt not but to make it appear that we have great assurance of the *Being* of *God*; but how far must the *Atheist* go, how heartily must he beg before his *Hypothesis* either of the fortuitous concurrence of *Atoms*, or *eternity* of the world will be granted to him? For if we stay till he proves either of these by evident and demonstrative reasons, the world may have an end before he proves his *Atoms* could give it a beginning, and we may find it *eternal à parte post*, before he can prove it was so *à parte ante*. For the proof of a *Deity*, we appeal to his own faculties, reason and conscience; we make use of arguments before his eyes: we bring the universal sense of man-

Sect. 8.
2.

kind along with us : But for his principles, we must wholly alter the present *stage* of the world, and crumble the whole Universe into little particles; we must grind the Sun to powder, and by a new way of interment turn the earth into dust and ashes, before we can so much as imagine how the world could be framed. And when we have thus far begged leave to imagine things to be what they never were, we must then stand by in some infinite space to behold the friskings and dancings about of these little particles of matter, till by their frequent rancounters and jostlings one upon another, they at last link themselves together, and run so long in a round till they make whirl-pools enough for Sun, Moon and Stars, and all the bodies of the Universe to emerge out of. But what was it which at first set these little particles of matter in motion? Whence came so great variety in them to produce such wonderful diversities in bodies as there are in the world? How came these casual motions to hit so luckily into such admirable contrivances as are in the Universe? When once I see a thousand blind men run the point of a sword in at a key hole without one missing; when I find them all frisking together in a spacious field, and exactly meeting all at last in the very middle of it; when I once find, as Tully speaks, the *Annals* of *Ennius* fairly written in a heap of sand, and as *Keplers* wife told him, a room full of herbs moving up and down, fall down into the exact order of fallets, I may then think the *Atomical Hypothesis* probable, and not before. But what evidence of reason, or demonstration have we that the great bodies of the world did resist from such a motion of these small particles? It is possible to be so, saith *Epicurus*; what if we grant it possible, can no things in the world be, which it is possible, might have been otherwise? What else thinks *Epicurus* of the Generations of things now? they are such certainly as the world now is, and yet he believes it was once otherwise: Must therefore a bare possibility of the contrary make us deny our reason, silence conscience, contradict the universal sense of mankind by excluding a Deity out of the world? But whence doth it appear possible? Did we ever find any thing of the same nature with the world produced in such a manner by such a course

course of Atoms ? Or is it because we find in natural beings, how much these particles of matter serve to solve the Phenomena of nature ? But doth it at all follow, because now under Divine providence which wisely orders the world, and things in it, that these particles, with their several affections and motion, may give us a tolerable account of many appearances as to bodies, that therefore the Universe had its origin meerly by a concretion of these without any Divine hand to order and direct their motion ? But of this more, when we come to the creation of the world ; our design now is only to compare the notion of a Deity, and of the Atheists Hypothesis in point of perspicuity and evidence of reason : of which let any one who hath reason judge. Thus we see how the Atheist in denying a Deity, must assert something else instead of it, which is pressed with the same, if not greater difficulties, and proved by far less reason.

The Atheist by the same principles on which he denies a God, must deny some things which are apparently true. Which will be evident by our running over the most plausible pretences which he insists upon. Sect. 9.
2

1. Because the Being of God cannot be demonstrated. But how doth the Atheist mean it ? is it because God cannot be demonstrated to sense, that we cannot *digito monstrari & dicier hic est*, point at him with our fingers ? It is a sign there is little of reason left, where sense is made the only Umpire of all kinds of Beings. Must all Intellectual Beings be proscribed out of the order of Nature, because they cannot pass the scrutiny of sense ? And by the same reason all colours shall be dashed out because they cannot be heard ; all noises silenced, because they cannot be seen ; for why may not one sense be set to judge of all objects of sense with far more reason, than sense it self be set as Judge over Intellectual Beings ? But yet it is wisely done of the Atheist to make sense his judge ; for if we once appeal to this, he knows our cause is lost ; for as he said of a Physician when one asked him, whether he had any experience of him, no, said he, *Si periculum fecissem, non viverem* ; If I had tryed him, I had been dead ere now ; so here, If God were to be tryed by the judgement of sense, he must cease to be God ; for how can an infinite and

Spiritual Being be discerned by the judgement of sense, and if he be not an *infinite and spiritual Being*, he is not *God*. But it may be the *Atheists* meaning is not so gross, but he intends such a demonstration to reason as that two and two make four, or that the whole is greater than the parts; with such a demonstration he would sit down contented. But will no less than this serve him? what becomes then of the worlds being made by a fortuitous concourse of *Atoms*? is this as evident, as that two and two make four? And will the *Philosophical Atheist* really believe nothing in nature, but what is as evident to him in material Beings, as that the whole is greater than the parts? By any means let *Atheists* then write *Philosophy*, that at last the *Clocks* in *London* may strike together, and the *Philosophers* agree; for I suppose none of them question that. But yet it is possible the *Atheist* may in a good humour abate something of this, and mean by demonstration such a proof as takes away all difficulties. If he means as to the ground of assent, we undertake it; if as to the object apprehended, we reject it as unreasonable, because it is impossible a *Being infinite* should be comprehended by us; for if it could, it were no longer infinite. But let us try this principle by other things, and how evident is it, that on this account some things must be denied which himself will confess to be true? for instance, that *opprobrium Philosophorum*, the divisibility of quantity, or extended matter into finite or infinite parts; let him take which side he please, and see whether by the force of the arguments on either side, if he hold to this principle, he must not be forced to deny that there is any such thing as matter in the world: and then we may well have an infinite empty space, when by the force of this one Principle, both *God* and matter are banished quite out of the world. But if the *Atheist* will but come one step lower, and by his demonstration intend nothing else but such a sufficient proof of it, as the nature of the thing is capable of, he will not only speak most consonantly to reason, but may be in some hopes of gaining satisfaction. For it is most evident, that all things are not capable of the like way of proof; and that in some cases the possibility of the contrary must be no hindrance to an undoubted assent. What these proofs are, will appear

appear afterwards. I come to the next ground of the *Atheist's* opinion, which is,

2. *The weakness of some arguments brought to prove a Deity.* But let us grant that some arguments will not do it, doth it therefore follow that *none* can do it? What if some have proved the *Sun* to be the center of the world; and the motion of the earth, by very weak arguments, will the *Atheist* therefore question it? what if *Epicurus* hath proved his *Atomical Hypothesis* by some silly *Sophisms*, will the *Atheist* therefore rather believe the creation of the world than it? What if the *Atheist* may make himself sport at some stories of apparitions insisted on to prove a *Deity*, doth it therefore follow there is no *God*, because some persons have been overcredulous? What if some having more zeal than knowledge, may attribute such things to *Gods* immediate hand, which may be produced by natural causes, doth it thence follow that *God* hath no hand in governing the world at all? What if fears, and hopes and persuasions, may depend much on principles of education, must conscience then be resolved wholly into these? What if some devout *Melancholist* may imbrace the issues of his own imagination for the impressions of the *Divine Spirit*, doth it therefore follow, that religion is nothing but strength of fancy improved by principles of education? What if some of the numerous proofs of a *Deity* were cut off, and only those made use of, which are of greatest force, would the truth suffer at all by that? I grant, advantage is often taken against a thing more by one weak argument brought for it, than against it by the strongest proofs: but I say, it is unreasonable it should be so; and were men rational and ingenuous it would not be so. Many times arguments may be good in their order, but they are misplaced; some may prove the thing rational, which may not prove it true; some may shew the absurdities of the adversaries rejecting the thing, which may not be sufficient to prove it; now when men number and not weigh their arguments, but give them in the lump to the main question, without fitting them to their several places, they do more disservice to the main of the battle by the disorder of their forces, than they can advantage it by the number of them.

3. Another great pretence the *Atheist* hath, is, that religion is only an invention of *Politicians*, which they awe people with as they please, and therefore tell them of a *God*, and another world, as *Mothers* send young children to school to keep them in better order, that they may govern them with the greater ease. To this I answer, 1. Religion I grant hath a great influence upon the well governing the world, nay so great, that were the *Atheists* opinion true, and the world perswaded of it, it were impossible the world could be well governed. For the Government of the world in civil societies, depends not so much on force, as the sacred bonds of duty and allegiance, which hold a Nation that owns religion as true, in far surer obligations to endeavour the peace and welfare of a Nation than ever violence can do. For in this case only an opportunity is watched for to shake off that which they account a yoke upon their necks ; whereas when mens minds are possessed with a sense of duty and obligation to obedience out of conscience, the reins may be held with greater ease ; and yet the people be better managed by them, than by such as only gall and irritate them. So that I grant true Religion to be the most serviceable principle for the governing of civil societies ; but withal, I say, 2. It were impossible religion should be so much made use of for the governing of people, were there not a real propensity and inclination to religion imprinted on the minds of men. For as, did not men love themselves, and their children their estates and interests, it were impossible to keep them in obedience to Laws ; but doth it follow, because *Magistrates* perswade people to obedience by suiting Laws to the general interest of men, that therefore the *Magistrates* first made them love themselves and their own concerns ? So it is in religion, the *Magistrate* may make use of this propensity to religion in men for civil ends, but his making use of it doth suppose it and not instil it. For were Religion nothing else in the world but a design only of *Politicians*, it would be impossible to keep that design from being discovered at one time or other, and when once it came to be known, it would hurry the whole world into confusion ; and the people would make no scruple of all oaths and obligations, but every one would seek to do
others

others what mischief he could if he had opportunity, and obey no further than fear and force constrained him. Therefore no principle can be so dangerous to a state as *Atheism*, nor any thing more promote its peace than true Religion; and the more men are persuaded of the truth of Religion, they will be the better subjects, and the more useful in civil societies. As well then may an *Atheist* say there is no such thing as good nature in the world, because that is apt to be abused, nor any such thing as love, because that may be cheated, as that Religion is nothing but a design, because men may make it stalk to their private ends. Thus we see how the *Atheist* by the force of those principles on which he denies a God, must be forced to deny other things, which yet by his own confession are apparently true.

So I come to the third Proposition, which is, *That we have as certain evidence that there is a God, as we can have, considering his nature.* When we demand the proof of a thing, our first eye must be to the nature of the things which we desire may be proved; For things equally true, are not capable of equal evidence, nor have like manners of probation. There is no demonstration in *Euclide* will serve to prove that there are such places as the *Indies*: we cannot prove the earth is round by the judgement of sense; nor that the soul is immortal by corporeal phantasms. Every distinct kind of Being hath its peculiar way of probation; and therefore it ought not to be at all wondred at, if the *Supream* and infinite Being have his peculiar way of demonstrating himself to the minds of men. If then we have as evident proofs of the existence of God, as we can have, considering the infinity of his nature, it is all which in reason we can desire; and of that kind of proofs we have these following. For, 1. If God hath stamped an universal character of himself upon the minds of men; 2. If the things in the world are the manifest effects of infinite wisdom, goodness and power; 3. If there be such things in the world which are unaccountable without a Deity, then we may with safety and assurance conclude that there is a God.

Sect. 10.
Prop. 3.

1. That God hath imprinted an universal character of himself on the minds of men, and that may be known by two things.

things. 1. *If it be such as bears the same importance among all persons.* 2. *If it be such as cannot be mistaken for the character of any thing else.*

1. I begin with the first, whereby I shall prove this character to be *universal*, because the whole world hath consented in it. This argument we may rely on with the greater security, because it was the only argument which retained the Deity in the ancient School of *Epicurus*; which could he have thought of as easie way of evading, as he thought he had found out as to the *Origine* of the *universe*, he was no such great friend to the very name of a God, as to have retained it as an *Anticipation* or *Prolepsis* of *humane nature*. And this argument from the *universal consent* of the world, was that which bore the greatest sway among the *Philosophers*, who went by nothing but dictates of *natural light*, which they could not so clearly discover in any things, as in those which all mankind did *unanimously* consent in. Two things I shall make out this by. 1. *That no sufficient account can be given of so universal a consent, unless it be supposed to be the voice of nature.* 2. *That the dissent of any particular persons is not sufficient to controul so universal an agreement.*

1. *That no sufficient account of it can be given, but only by asserting it to be a dictate of nature.* In so strange a dissent as there hath been in the world concerning most of those things which relate to mankind in common, as the models of government, the Laws they are ruled by, the particular rites and customs of worship; we have the greatest reason to judge that those common principles which were the foundations on which all these several different customs were built, were not the effect of any positive Laws, nor the meer force of principles of education, but something which had a deeper root and foundation in the principles of nature it self. A common and universal effect must flow from some common and universal cause. So the *Stoick* argues in *Tully*, *If there were no God, non tam stabilis opinio permaneret, nec confirmaretur diuturnitate temporis, nec una cum seculis atatibusque hominum inveterare potuisset.* It is strange to think that mankind in so many ages of the world should not grow wise enough to rid it.

it self of so troublesome an opinion as that was, of the *Being of God*, had it not been true.

We see in all the *alterations* of the world, other vain opinions have been detected, refuted and shaken off; if this had been such, how comes it to remain the same in all ages, and Nations of the world? *Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.* It is a great discredit to *Time* to make it like a River in that sense, that it bears up only *lighter* things, when matters of greatest *weight* are sunk to the bottom and past recovery; This may pass for a handsom allusion, as to the opinions and writings of particular persons, but cannot be understood of such *things* which are founded on the universal consent of the world; for these common notions of humane nature are so suited to the temper of the world, that they pass down the strong current of *Time* with the same facility that a well built ship, though of good burden, doth furrow the Ocean. So that if we must adhere to the *Allegory*, it is easily replied, that it is not the *weight* of things which makes them sink, but the unsuitableness of their *superficies* to that of the Water, so we see a small piece of wood will sink, when a stately ship is born up; so such things which have not that agreeableness in them to the dictates of Nature, may soon be lost, but such as lie so even upon the superficies of the soul, will still float above the water, and never be lost in the swiftest current of *Time*. Thus we assert this universal consent of mankind, as to the existence of a *Deity*, to be a thing so consonant to our Natural reason, that as long as there are men in the World it will continue.

But now it is hardly conceivable, according to the Principles of *Epicurus*, how mankind should universally agree in some common sentiments; much less how it should have such an anticipation as himself grants of the *Being of God*. For if the soul be nothing else but some more active and vigorous particles of matter (as *Diogenes Laertius* tells us, that his opinion was that the soul was nothing else but a System of *ἀτῶν λειοτάτων καὶ στρογγυλοτάτων*, of the most smooth and round atoms) if so, it is very hard apprehending how any such things as anticipations or common Notions can be lodged in

Sect. 11.

Lib. 10. in v.
Epic. v. Gas-
send.
To. 2. l. 3. sect. 2.

the soul? For if our *souls* be nothing else but some small *spherical corpuscles* which move up and down the body, as the *Epicurean Philosophy* supposeth, then all our knowledge and perception must depend on *motion*, which *motion* must be by the *impression* of *external objects*: which *Lucretius* acknowledged and contends for.

*Invenies primis à sensibus esse creatam
Notitiam veri.*

Lib. 4.

De Nat. Deor.
lib. 1.

If then our *knowledge* of *truth* comes in by our *senses*, and *sensation* doth wholly depend upon the *impression* of outward *objects*, what becomes of all *common Notions* and of the *Prolepsis* of a *Deity*? unless we suppose the knowledge of a *Deity* came in by *sense*, which *Epicurus* himself denies when he attributes to the *Deity* not *corpus*, but *quasi corpus*, as *Tully* tells us, and therefore he is not a proper *object* of *sense*. So that it is impossible there should be any such thing as a *natural Notion* which may be the *ground* of *universal consent* among men, according to the *Doctrine* of *Epicurus*. And therefore it stands to all *reason* in the world, that if our *senses* be the only competent *Judges* of *truth*, men should differ about nothing more than such things which cannot be tried by the judgement of *sense*; Such as the notion of a *God* is; (for where should men be more uncertain in their judgements, than in such things which they have no rule at all to go by in the judging of?) but we are so far from *finding* it so, that men are nothing so much agreed about the *objects* of *sense*, as they are about the *existence* of a *Deity*; and therefore we see this *universal consent* of *mankind* concerning a *God*, cannot be *salved* by the *principles* of those who deny it; according to which no account at all can be given of any such things as *universal* or *common notions*.

Scit. 12.

Neither can this *universal consent* of *mankind* be *enervated* with any greater probability by those *Atheists* who assert the *eternity* of the world, and resolve this *consent* wholly into meer *tradition*, such as the *Fables* of *Poets* were conveyed in from one to another. For I demand concerning this *tradition*, Whether

Whether ever it had any *beginning* or no? If it had no *beginning*, it could be no *tradition*; for that must run up to some *persons* from whom it first came; again, if it had no *beginning*, it was *necessary* that it should always be, on the same accounts on which they make the World eternal. And if it be *necessary*, it must be *antecedent* to any free *act* of *mans* will which *tradition* supposeth; and so some false *opinion* would be found to be as *necessary* as the worlds being *eternal*, (and by consequence the Worlds being *eternal* may be a *necessary* false opinion) but if any false *opinion* be once granted *necessary*, it then follows that our *faculties* are not *true*, and that *nature* is a necessary cause of some *notorious falsity*, which is the highest *impeachment* the *Atheist* could have laid upon his only adored *Nature*; which must then have done that, (which *Aristotle* was ashamed to think ever *nature* should be guilty of) which is *something in vain*; for to what *purpose* should man have *rational faculties*, if he be under an unavoidable *necessity* of being *deceived*? If then it be granted that this *tradition* had once a *beginning*, either it *began* with *humane Nature*, or *humane Nature* did exist long before it; if it *began* with *mankind*, then *mankind* had a *beginning*, and so the world was not *eternal*; if *mankind* did exist before this *tradition*, I then enquire in what *time*, and by what *means*, came this *tradition* first to be embraced, if it doth not suppose the *existence* of a *Deity*? Can any *age* be mentioned in *history*, wherein this *tradition* was not universally received? and which is most to our purpose, the further we go back in *history*, the fuller the world was of *Deities*, if we believe the *Heathen Histories*; but however no *age* can be *instanced* in, wherein this *tradition* began first to be believed in the World; we can trace the *Poetick Fables* to their true *original*, by the *testimonies* of those who believed them; we know the particular *Authors* of them, and what *course* they took in *divulging* of them; we find great *diversities* among themselves in the *meaning* of them, and many *nations* that never heard of them. But all things are quite otherwise in this *tradition*; we have *none* to fix on as the *first Authors* of it; if the world were *eternal*, and the belief of a *Deity* *fabulous*, we cannot understand by what *artifice* a *fabulous*

tradition could come to be so universally received in the world, that no Nation of old could be instanced in by the *inquisitive Philosophers*, but however rude and barbarous it was, yet it owned a *Deity*. How could such a tradition be spread so far, but either by *force* or *fraud*? It could not be by *force*, because embraced by an unanimous consent where no *force* at all hath been used, and hath been so rooted in the very *Natures* of those people who have been most tender of their liberties, that they have resented no indignity so highly, as any *affronts* they conceived to be offered to their *Gods*. Nay, and where any persons would seem to quit the belief of a *Deity*, we find what *force* and *violence* they have used to their own reason and Conscience to bring themselves to *Atheism*, which they could not subdue their minds to any longer than the will could command the understanding, which when it gained but a little liberty to examine it self, or view the world, or was alarmed with *thunder*, *earthquakes*, or violent sicknesses, did bring back again the sense of a *Deity* with greater force and power than they had endeavoured to shake it off with. Now had this tradition come by force into the world, there would have been a secret exultation of mind to be freed from it, as we see Nature rejoiceth to shake off every thing which is violent, and to settle every thing according to its due order. It is only fraud then which can be with any reason imagined in this case; and how unreasonable it is to imagine it here, will appear to any one who doth consider how extremely jealous the world is of being imposed upon by the subtilty of such who are thought to be the greatest Politicians. For the very opinion of their subtilty makes men apt to suspect a design in every thing they speak or do, so that nothing doth more generally hinder the entertaining of any notion so much among vulgar people, as that it comes from a person reputed very politick. So that the most politick way of gaining upon the apprehensions of the vulgar, is by taking upon one the greatest appearance of simplicity and integrity; and this now could not be done by such Politicians which we now speak of, but by accommodating themselves to such things in the people which were so consonant to their Natures, that they could suspect no design at all.

all in the *matters* propounded to them. And thus I assert it to have been in the present case, in all those *Politick Governours* who at first brought the world into both *civil* and *Religious Societies*, after they were grown *rude* and *barbarous*; for as it had been *impossible* to have brought them into *civil Societies*, unless there had been supposed an *inclination* to *Society* in them, so it had been equally *impossible* to have brought them to embrace any particular way of *Religion*, unless there had been a natural *propensity* to *Religion* implanted in them, and founded in the general *belief* of the *existence* of a *Deity*. And therefore we never find any of the ancient *founders* of *Common-wealths* go about to *persuade* the people that there was a *God*, but this they supposed and made their *advantage* of it, the better to *draw* the people on to embrace that way of *worship*, which they delivered to them, as most suitable to their own design. And this is plainly evident in the vast difference of *designs* and *interests* which were carried on in the *Heathen world* upon this general apprehension of a *Deity*. How came the world to be so easily abused into *Religions* of all *shapes* and *fashions*, had not there been a natural *inclination* in mens souls to *Religion*, and an *Indeleble Idea* of a *Deity* on the *minds* of men? Were then this *propensity* *groundless*, and this *Idea* *fictionous*, it were the greatest *sur* imaginable, which could be cast upon *Nature*, that when the *instincts* of *irrational agents* argue something *real* in them; only *man* the most *Noble being* of the *visible world*, must be fatally carried to the *belief* of that which never was. Which yet hath so great a *force* and *awe* upon *man*, that nothing creates so great *anxieties* in his life as this doth; nothing lays him more open to the *designs* of any who have an intent to *abuse* him. But yet further, the *Politicians* who first abused the world in telling them there was a *God*, did they themselves believe there was a *God* or no? If they did, then they had no such end as *abusing* the world into such a *belief*. If they did not, upon what accounts did they believe there was *none*, when the people were so ready to believe there was one? Was that as certain as *tradition* before that there was no *God*, as afterwards they made it to be that there was? If so, then all those people whom they *persuaded*

to believe there was a God, did before, all believe there was none ; and how can it possibly enter into the reason of any man to think, that people who had been brought up in the belief that there was no God at all, nor any state after this life, should all unanimously quit the principles of education which tended so much to their ease and pleasure here, to believe there was a God and another life, and thereby to fill themselves full of fears and disquietments ; meerly because their Rulers told them so ? Again, if these Rulers themselves were so wise as not to believe a Deity, can we imagine there ever was such an age of the world wherein it fell out so happily, that only the Rulers were wise, and all the subjects fools ? But it may be, it will be said, that all who were wise themselves did not believe a Deity, but yet consented to the practice of Religion, because it was so useful for the Government of mankind ; but can it be thought that all these wise men which we must suppose of several ranks and degrees, (for Philosophers are not always States-men, nor States-men Philosophers) should so readily concur in such a thing which tended most to the Interest of the Prince, and to the abuse of the world ? Would none of them be ready to assert the truth, though it were but to make a party of their own, and discover to the people, that it was only the ambition and design of their Governours which sought to bring the people to slavery by the belief of such things which were contrary to the tradition of their fore-fathers, and would make their lives, if they believed them, continually troublesome and unquiet ? Or if we could suppose things should hit thus in one Nation, what is this to the whole World which the Atheist here supposeth eternal ? What, did all the Rulers of the world exactly agree in one moment of time ; or at least in one age thus to abuse the World ? Did the designs of Governours and the credulity of all people fall out to be so suitable together ? But on the contrary, we do not find that Governours can have the judgments of people so at their command, that they can make them to believe what they please ; if it were so, we may well say with that Atheistical Pope, *Hec quam minimo regitur mundus* ; What a twine thread will rule the world ! But granting these things, (which any but an Atheist will say are impossible)

possible) yet whence should it come to pass that the world which is generally led more by the *opinions* of their forefathers, than by *reason*, should so *cancel* that former tradition that there was no *God*, that no remaining *footsteps* of it can be traced in any history of those times? Or did the *Governors* all consent to abolish all *records* of it? *Publick* and *written* I grant they might, but not *those* out of men's minds and memories; which would have been for the *ease* of the *minds* of their posterity conveyed in some secret *Cabala* from *Fathers* to their *Children*. It may be it will be said, *so it was*, but men *durst* not profess it for *fear* of the *Laws*; but it is not evident that the *Laws* of all the ancient *Commonwealths* were so severe against *Atheism*, and withall how came some of the wisest and most *Philosophical* men of *Greece* and *Rome* to embrace the existence of a *Deity* as a thing far more consonant to *reason* than the contrary opinion, and established their belief on such evidences from *nature* it self, that none of their *Antagonists* were able to answer them? It was not certainly the fear of *Laws* which made men *rational* and *inquisitive* into the *natures* and *causes* of things; and yet those who were such amidst the great *Idolatries* of the *Heathen*, and being destitute of *divine revelation*, yet freely and firmly assented to the existence of a *Diety*. Had it been only *fraud* and *imposture* which brought men to believe a *God*, whence came it to pass that this *fraud* was not discovered by these *Philosophers*, who were far better able by their nearness to those *eldest times*, and much converse abroad in other Nations (for some travelled into *Egypt*, *Chaldea*, *Persia*, *India*, merely to gain knowledge) to have found out such an *imposture*, had it been such, than any of our modern *Atheists*? Whence come these now in this almost *decrepitate* age of the world to be the first *smellers* out of so great a *design*? By what means, what *tokens* and *evidence* came such an *imposture* to their knowledge? Because, forsooth, the world is still apt to be abused by a pretence of *Religion*; but he that doth not see how silly and ridiculous a *Sophism* that is, either by his own *reason*, or by what hath gone before; hath *wit* and *reason* little enough to be an *Atheist*. Some therefore who would seem a little wiser than the vulgar sort of *Atheists* (for it seems there

is a *vulgus* among them too, I wish it be more for their meanness than multitude) are so far convinced of the unreasonable-ness of judging that the belief of a Deity came in by fraud, that finding it so general and universal, they attribute it to as general and universal a cause, which is the influence of the stars. So true still is that of the Poet, *Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitia*; for by what imaginable influence come the stars to plant opinions in mens minds so deeply and universally? But yet further, is this opinion which is thus caused by the stars, true or false? if the opinion be true, we have what we desire; if false, what malignant influence is this of the stars so powerfully to sway men to the belief of a falsity? How far are the stars then from doing good to mankind, when they are so influential to deceive the world; but then by what peculiar influence come some men to be freed from this general imposture? If the cause be so universal, the effect must be universal too. But if only the Nativity and continuance of some particular religions may be calculated by the stars, (as Cardan and Vaninus Atheistically suppose) whence then comes the general propensity and inclination to Religion in all ages and Nations of the World? If it be then caused by the Heavens in general, it must be produced necessarily and universally, and so to be an Atheist, were impossible; if it be caused by the influence of some particular stars, then when that influence cealeth, the world would universally relapse into Atheism. So that there is no possible way of avoiding this universal consent of mankind, as an argument that there is a God, when all the pretences of the Atheist against it are so weak, ridiculous and impertinent.

Sett. 13.

The only thing then left for him, is to deny the truth of the thing, viz. that there is such an universal consent; because some persons have been found in the world who have not agreed with the rest of mankind in this opinion. To this I answer, (which was the second particular for clearing this argument) that the dissent of these persons is not sufficient to manifest the consent not to be universal, and to arise from a dictate of nature. For I demand of the greatest Atheist, Whether it be sufficient to say, that it is not natural for men to have two legs, because some have been born with one, or that it is

not

not natural for men to *desire life* (which the *Atheist* loves so dearly) because there have been so many who have taken away their own lives? If it be said that these are *Monsters* and *Anomalies* in nature, and therefore not to be reckoned in the regular account of things, the same I may with as great reason say of *Atheists*, that they are to be disjuncted out of the *Census* of such who act upon free principles of reason; because there may be some peculiar reasons given of their dissent from the rest of mankind in the denial of a *Deity*. We see by the old *Philosophers* how far the affectation of Novelty, and ambition of being cryed up for no vulgar wits, may carry men to deny such things, which are most common and obvious in the world. Is there any thing more plain and evident to reason, than that it implies a contradiction for the same thing to be and not be at the same time, and yet if we believe *Aristotle*, who largely disputes against them, εἰς δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ οἱ αὐτοὶ τὸ ἐνδέχεται παρὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἢ καὶ μὴ ἢ. *There were some who affirmed that a thing might be and not be at the same time.* What so evident in nature as motion, yet the *Philosopher* is well known who disputed against it, and thought himself subtile in doing so too? What are men more assured of, than that they live, and yet (if it be not too dogmatical, even in that to believe the *Scepticks*) it was a thing none could be assured of? What are our senses more assured of than that the snow is white, yet all the *Philosophers* were not of that opinion? Is this then sufficient reason on which to deny an universal consent, because some *Philosophers* opposed it, when it is most undoubtedly true, which *Tully* sharply speaks of the ancient *Philosophers*, *Nihil tam absurdum quod non dixerit aliquis Philosophorum*; there was no absurdity so great, but it found a *Philosopher* to vouch it? But in this case those *Philosophers* who questioned the existence of a *Deity*, though they were not for number to be compared with those who asserted it, yet were not so inexcusable therein, as our *Modern Atheists*; because they then knew no other way of Religion, but that which was joyned with horrible superstition, and ridiculous rites of worship; they were strangers to any thing of divine relation, or to any real miracles wrought to confirm it, and to such a way of serving God which is most agreeable to

Metaphys. lib. 4. c. 4.

De nat. Deor. l. 3.

the Divine nature, most suitable to our reason, most effectual for advancing true goodness in the world. And although this most excellent Religion, viz. the Christian, be subject to many scandals by reason of the corruptions which have been mixed with it by those who have professed it, yet the Religion it self is clear and untainted, being with great integrity preserved in the sacred records of it. So that now *Atheism* hath far less to plead for it self, than it had in the midst of the ignorance and superstition of the *Heathen Idolatries*. But, if we should grant the *Atheist* more than he can prove, that the number of such who denied a Deity hath been great in all ages of the world; is it probable they should speak the sense of nature, whose opinion, if it were embraced, would dissolve all ties and obligations whatsoever, would let the world loose to the highest licentiousness, without check or controul, and would in time overturn all civil Societies? For as Tully hath largely shewn, Take away the being and providence of God out of the world, and there follows nothing but perturbation and confusion in it; not only all sanctity, piety and devotion is destroyed, but all faith, virtue and humane Societies too; which are impossible to be upheld without Religion, as not only he, but Plato, Aristotle, and Plutarch have fully demonstrated. Shall such persons then who hold an opinion so contrary to all other dictates of nature, rather speak the sense of nature than they who have asserted the Belief of a Deity, which tends so much to advance nature, to regulate the world, and to reform the lives of men? Certainly if it were not a dictate of nature that there was a God, it is impossible to conceive the world should be so constant in the belief of him, when the thoughts of him breed so many anxieties in mens minds, and withal, since God is neither obvious to sense, nor his nature comprehensible by humane reason. Which is a stronger evidence it is a character of himself which God hath imprinted on the minds of men, which makes them so unanimously agree that he is, when they can neither see him, nor yet fully comprehend him. For any whole Nation, which have consented in the denial of a Deity, we have no evidence at all; some suspicions it is true there were at first concerning some very barbarous people in America, but it is since evident, though

De Nat Deor.
l. 1. & De Legibus lib. 2.

though they are grossly mistaken as to the nature of God, yet they worship something instead of him, such as the *Toupin-amboults*, *Caribes*, *Paragons*, *Tapuia* and others; of the last of which *Vossius* from one *Christophorus Arcissewski* a Polish Gentleman who was among them, hath given a large account of their Religion, and the manner of their worshipping of their gods, both good and bad. And that which among these Indians much confirms our present argument, is, that only those who have been the most barbarous and savage Nations, have been suspected of irreligion, but the more civilized they have been, the more evident their sense of Religion. The *Peruvians* worship one chief God, whom they call *Virachocha*, and *Pachacamack*, which is as much as the Creator of Heaven and Earth. And of the Religion of the *Mexicans*, *Lipsius* and others speak. So that the nearer any have approached to civility and knowledge, the more ready they have been to own a Deity, and none have had so little sense of it, as they who are almost degenerated to Brutes; and whether of these two now comes nearer to reason, let any one who hath it judge.

Addend. ad lib.
1. De Idol. p. 2.

V. Acoſtam. 1.
5. c. 3.
Lipsi. Monit. &
exempl. Politic.

Another great evidence that God hath imprinted a character or Idea of himself on the minds of men is, because such things are contained in this Idea of God, which do necessarily imply his existence. The main force of this argument lies in this, That which we do clearly and distinctly perceive to belong to the nature and essence of a thing, may be with truth affirmed of the thing; not that it may be affirmed with truth to belong to the nature of the thing, for that were an empty Tautology, but it may be affirmed with truth of the thing it self, as if I clearly perceive upon exact enquiry, that to be an animal doth belong to the nature of man, I may with truth affirm that man is a living creature; if I find it demonstrably true that a Triangle hath three angles equal to two right ones, then I may truly affirm it of any Triangle; but now we assume, that upon the most exact search and enquiry, I clearly perceive that necessary existence doth immutably belong to the nature of God, therefore, I may with as much truth affirm, that God exists, as that man is a living creature; or a Triangle hath three angles equal to two right ones. But because many are so apt to

Seet. 14.
2.

suspect some kind of *Sophism* in this argument, when it is managed from the *Idea* in mens minds, because that seems to imply only an *objective reality* in the mind, and that nothing can be thence inferred as to the *existence* of the thing whose *Idea* it is, I therefore shall endeavour to manifest more clearly the force of this argument, by proving severally the *suppositions* which it stands upon, which are these three. 1. *That clear and distinct perception of the mind is the greatest evidence we can have of the truth of any thing.* 2. *That we have this clear perception that necessary existence doth belong to the nature of God.* 3. *That if necessary existence doth belong to Gods nature, it unavoidably follows that he doth exist.* Nothing can be desired more plain or full to demonstrate the force of this argument, than by proving every one of these.

1. *That the greatest evidence we can have of the truth of a thing, is, a clear and distinct perception of it in our minds.* For otherwise the rational faculties of mans soul would be wholly useleß, as being not fitted for any end at all, if upon a right use of them, men were still liable to be deceived. I grant, the imperfection of our minds in this present state is very great, which makes us so obnoxious to error and mistake; but then that imperfection lies in the proneness in mans mind to be led by interest and prejudice in the judgement of things; but in such things as are purely speculative and rational, if the mind cannot be certain it is not deceived in them, it can have no certainty at all of any *Mathematical demonstrations*. Now we find in our minds a clear and convincing evidence in some things, as soon as they are propounded to our understandings, as that a thing cannot be and not be at the same time; that, a non-entity can have no proper attributes; that, while I reason and discourse, I am; these are so clear, that no man doth suspect himself deceived at all in them. Besides, if we had no ground of certainty at all in our judging things, to what purpose is there an *Idea* of true and false in our minds, if it be impossible to know the one from the other? But I say not, that in all perceptions of the mind we have certain evidence of truth, but only in such as are clear and distinct; that is, when upon the greatest consideration of the nature of a thing, there appears no ground or reason at all to

to doubt concerning it; and this must suppose the minds abstraction wholly from the senses; for we plainly find that while we attend to them, we may judge our selves very certain, and yet be deceived, as those who have an *Isterism* in their eyes, may judge with much confidence that they see things as clearly and distinctly as any other doth. Besides, there are many things taken for granted by men, which have no evidence of reason at all in them; Now if men will judge of the truth of things by such principles, no wonder if they be deceived. But when we speak of clear and distinct perceptions, we suppose the mind to proceed upon evident principles of reason, or to have such notions of things, which as far as we can perceive by the light of reason, do agree with the natures of the things we apprehend; if in such things then there be no ground of certainty, it is as much as to say our Faculties are to no purpose; which highly reflects either upon God or nature. It is a noble question as any is in Philosophy, What is the certain *certior* of the truth of things, or what ground of certainty the mind hath to proceed upon in its judgement of the truth of such objects as are represented to it? Nothing can render the Philosophy of *Epicurus* more justly suspected to any rational and inquisitive mind; than his making the senses the only certain conveyers of the truth of things to the mind. The senses I grant do not in themselves deceive any, but if I make the impressions of sense to be the only rule for the mind to judge by of the truth of things, I make a way for the greatest impostures, and the most erring judgments. For if my mind affirms every thing to be in its proper nature according to that Idea which the imagination hath received from the impressions upon the Organs of sense, it will be impossible for me ever to understand the right natures of things. Because the natures of things may remain the same, when all those things in them which affect the Organs of sense may be altered, and because the various motion and configuration of the particles of matter, may make such an impression upon the senses, which may cause an Idea in us of that in the things themselves, which yet may be only in the manner of sensation; As some Philosophers suppose it to be in heat and cold. Now if the mind judgeth of the nature of things according

to those *Idea's* which come from the *impressions* made upon the *Organs of sense*; how is it possible it should ever come to a right judgement of the *natures* of things? So that in reference even to the grossest *material beings*, it must be the perception only of the *mind*, which can truly inform us of their proper *nature* and *essence*. Besides, there are many *Idea's* of things in the *mind* of man which are capable to have *properties demonstrated* of them, which never owed their *original* to our *senses*; and were never imported to the *mind* at the *Keyes* of the *senses*. Such are most *Mathematical figures* which have their *peculiar properties* and *demonstrations*; such are all the *mutual respects* of things to each other, which may be as certain and evident to the *mind* as it *self* is; now it is plain by this, that all *certainity of knowledge* is not conveyed by the *senses*; but our truest way of certain *understanding* the *nature* of any thing, is by the *clear and distinct perception* of the *mind*, which is founded on the *Truth* of our *faculties*; and that however we may be *deceived* when we do not make a right *use* of our *reason*, because of the *imperfection* of our present *state*; yet if we say our *mind* may be deceived when things are evident and clear to them upon plain *principles of reason*, it is highly to reflect upon that *God* who gave men *rational faculties*, and made them capable of discerning *Truth* from *falsehood*.

2. That we have clear and distinct perception that necessity of existence doth belong to the nature of God. For which we are to consider the vast difference which there is in our notion of the nature of God, and of the nature of any other being. In all other beings, I grant we may abstract essence and existence from each other; now if I can make it appear, that there is evident reason, *ex parte rei*, why I cannot do it in the notion of God, then it will be more plain that necessity of existence doth immutably belong to his nature. It is manifest to our reason, that in all other beings, which we apprehend the natures of, nothing else can be implied in the natures of them beyond bare possibility of existence; no, although the things which we do apprehend, do really exist, because in forming an *Idea* of a thing, we abstract from every thing which is not implied in the very nature of the thing: now existence being

ing only *contingent* and *possible*, as to any other *being*, it cannot be any *ingredient* of its *Idea*, because it doth not belong to its *essence*; for we may fully apprehend the nature of the *thing*, without attributing *existence* to it. But now in our conception of a *Being absolutely perfect*, bare possibility or contingency of *existence* speaks a direct repugnancy to the *Idea* of him; for how can we conceive, that *Being absolutely perfect*, which may want that which gives life to all other *perfections*, which is *existence*? The only scruple which mens minds are *subject* to in apprehending the force of this argument lies in this, Whether this *necessary existence* doth really belong to the nature of that being whose *Idea* it is, or else it be only a *Mode* of our conception in apprehending God? For clearing of this, we must consider by what certain rules we can know when the composition of things together in the understanding doth depend upon the meer operation of the mind, and when they do belong to the things themselves and their immutable nature. For which we have no rule so certain and evident as this is, that in those things which depend meerly on the act of the mind joyning together, the understanding cannot only abstract one thing from another, but may really divide them in its conceptions from each other: but in such things which cannot be divided from each other, but the essence of the thing is quite altered, it is a certain evidence that those things were not conjoynd by the meer act of the mind, but do immutably belong to the natures of the things themselves. As for instance, when I conceive a *Triangle* inscribed in a *square*, a *man walking*, a *horse with wings*, it is evident I may understand the natures of all these things without these affections of them, because I can fully apprehend the nature of a *Triangle*, without imagining a *square*, a *man without walking*, a *horse without wings*; thence it necessarily follows, that the joyning of these things together, was meerly an act of the mind; but now I cannot conceive a *Triangle* not to have three angles equal to two right ones, nor a *man* that hath not rationality belonging to him; for if I divide these attributes from them, I destroy their natures; and therefore the joyning of these together is not any meer act of the mind; but these are such things as are implied in the very notion of them, and

and therefore *immutably* belongs to them. So now, when I conceive the notion of a *body*, I can imagine all *perfections* belonging to it, without *conceiving* it *necessarily* to exist; for it may be a *body* still, though it hath not its *being* from it self; but when I conceive a *Being* *absolutely* perfect, it is *impossible* to imagine it should have its *being* from any other; and if it be from it self, it must of *necessity* exist. For though the *mind* still be apt to doubt, whether *existence* in this *Idea* be only a *mode* of *cogitation*; yet that doubt may be easily removed, if the *mind* doth but *attend* to this, that at least *possibility* of *existence* doth belong to all those *Beings* which we have a clear *Idea* of in our *minds*; and the reason why we attribute bare *possibility* to them, is because we apprehend some *reason* in our *minds* which keeps us from *attributing* *necessity* of *existence* to them, as that it is not *implied* in its *nature*, or that it doth *depend* on some other *being*, or that it wants *infinite* power, &c. Now all these *reasons* which make us attribute bare *possibility* of *existence* to any *being*, are taken away when we conceive a *being* *absolutely* perfect; for then *existence* is *implied* among the *number* of *perfections*; and this *being* is *independent*, upon all others, and *infinitely* powerful; so that *nothing* can hinder its *existence*; and therefore we must *conclude* that *necessity* of *existence* doth *immutably* belong to the *nature* and *notion* of *God*, and is not any *mode* only of our *conception*; because if we take away *necessity* of *existence* from *God*, we lose the *notion* of a *Being* *absolutely* perfect.

The third thing, that if *necessary* existence belongs to the *nature* of *God*, he doth exist, not only follows as a *necessary* conclusion from the other two, as the *premises*, but is in it self evident to any ones *reason*; for it implies no less than a *contradiction* for a *being* to exist *necessarily*, and yet it be questionable, Whether it doth exist or no? Thus much I suppose may suffice here to *explain* and *enforce* this argument; if any are yet unsatisfied, I refer them to those *judicious* Authors, who have made it their *peculiar* business to manage it, and *vindicate* it from all *objections*: which falls in only here as an *evidence* that *God* hath imprinted a *character* of himself on the *minds* of men, seeing we have so clear and distinct an *Idea*

Vid. Des cartes
Metaphys. Me-
dit. & Resp.
ad Object.

D. H. More An-
tidote against
Atheism. lib. 1.
ch. 8. Append.
cb. 5, 6, 7.

of

of such a *Being*, from whom, if we take away necessity of existence, we destroy that notion which our minds have of an absolutely perfect *Being*. This is the first way whereby we can conceive an *Infinite Being* may make himself known to mankind, by imprinting an *Indeleble character* of himself upon the *soul*, which can be attributed to none besides himself without doing manifest violence to our own faculties, and suspecting our selves deceived in things which are most clear and evident to us.

I come to the second evidence which God hath given us of Sect. 15. his own existence, which is the mark and impression which he hath left of an infinite Wisdom and Counsel in the appearances which are in nature. There needs no greater Criticism to find out the true Author of all the works of nature; the works themselves shew the Author as plainly, as if his effgies were drawn upon them. If the great curiosity and contrivance of any artificial engine speak the excellency of the Mechanical wit of the framer of it; what ridiculous folly will it be to impute that rare mechanism of the works of nature to the blind and fortuitous motion of some particles of matter? Suppose a multitude of letters casually thrown together, should fall so handsomely in order, that we might read in them the names of *Troja, Juno, Aeneas, Dido, Turnus, Ascanius*, or the like; is it possible for any to imagine that ever they should reach the grandeur, style, matter and accuracy of the whole Books of the *Aeneids*? So granting, that now matter being set in motion by a divine power, may, by its continual agitation, at last produce some of the appearances of nature; yet what is this to the whole Universe, or the admirable contrivance of any one part in it? If these things had been the result of meer matter and motion, when once the particles of matter had been so united and settled together, as to produce any one species of animals in the world (which it is almost unconceivable they should) yet we cannot think that if there had been but symmetry of parts enough for it meerly to subsist its self, and propagate more, there could have been any further attempt made by those Atoms, which had been once settled in a determinate figure. How came it then to pass that there is not any one species of animals in the world,

De Nat. Deor.
l. 2. c. 95.

but what hath such an order, symmetry and contrivance of parts, which speaks more than meer necessity of subsistence, and therefore speaks them to be the effects of a supream Governour of the world, and not the products of meer matter? Is it possible that any, who is not before-hand resolved to exclude a Deity, should imagine that any particles of matter should fall into the exact form, order, motion, and serviceableness to the world which the Heavenly bodies are in, without divine counsel and wisdom disposing of them? Tully tells us of a speech of Aristotle to this purpose; If we could suppose persons to have lived in some caverns of the earth, and to have enjoyed every thing there of pleasure, and riches, or whatever it is which we think makes mens lives happy, and had never been abroad upon the surface of the earth, but had onely some obscure report of an infinite power and Being; and that afterwards these persons should by an opening of the caverns wherein they were, come abroad into these parts of the world, and should suddenly behold the Earth, Sea, and the Heavens, and observe the vastness of the clouds, and violence of winds, and behold the bigness, beauty, and influence of the Sun, and how the day depended upon his presence, and upon his withdrawing should view the face of the Heavens again (as it were the second course of nature) the order and ornament of the Stars, the varieties of the light of the Moon, their rising and setting, and their fixed and immoveable courses, they could not hold from believing there was a Deity, and that these were the effects of his power. So vastly different are the free and natural emanations of our souls, from that which we force and strain out of our selves by distorting and wringing those free principles of reason which God hath given us. When a few sorry experiments and some Arbitrary Hypotheses, must make us form other conceptions of things, than the majesty, order, and beauty of them do naturally suggest to us: We see when once we can but abstract our minds from those prejudices which continual conversation with the world brings upon us, by that speech of Aristotle, how readily our minds will frame an excellent commentary upon those words of the royal Psalmist, The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament shews his handy-work. To which purpose likewise those words of the excellent

excellent Orator himself in another place are very observable; *Quid est enim verius quam neminem esse oportere tam De Legibus stulte arrogantem, ut in se mentem & rationem putet inesse, in l. 2. cælo mundoque non putet? aut ea quæ vix summa ingenii ratione comprehendat, nulla ratione moveri putet? quem vero astrorum ordines, quem dierum noctiumque vicissitudines, quem mensium temperatio, quemque ea quæ gignuntur nobis ad fruendum, non gratum esse cogant, hunc hominem omnino numerare qui dicet? What monstrous arrogance would it be in any man to think there is a mind and reason in himself, and that there is none in the world? or to think those things are moved without reason and understanding, which all that he hath is scarce able to comprehend? Neither can he deserve the name of a man, from whom the observation of the courses of the stars, the succession and order of seasons, and the innumerable benefits which he enjoys in the world, does not extort gratitude towards that Being which ordered all these things. What a low opinion then had those more refined and generous spirits who went onely upon principles of pure and undistorted reason, of those mean and ignoble souls, which were inclined to Atheism; especially then, when Religion was so abused, that it was true of the wisest of them, what one said of Erasmus, *Magis habuit quid fugeret quam quid sequeretur*, they knew what to avoid, but not what they should embrace? And yet when they saw so much into the folly and superstition of Heathen-worship, they saw the greatest reason still to adhere to the belief of a Deity, as may be clearly seen, especially in the second of those excellent Dialogues of Tully, *de natura Deorum*; where this particular argument to prove a Deity from the admirable contrivance of the works of nature, is managed with a great deal of eloquence and reason, and by particular enumeration of most considerable parts of the Universe. So unbecoming a late Philosopher was that reason of his, why he waved the argument from the consideration of the world to infer a Deity, because the ends of God are unsearchable, as flowing from his Infinite wisdom. For what though God may conceal some things from men, which he intends, and are of no concernment for man to know, must therefore of necessity those ends of his be unsearchable in his works of Creation,*

which refer so immediately to the advantage of life, and tend so much to the veneration of the Deity?

Sett. 6.

Nay the peculiar use and serviceableness of many parts of the Universe, especially of Animals, and chiefly of man, is so evident, that this hath been the main argument which hath induced some, otherwise Atheistical enough, to acknowledge and adore a Deity. And although the Epicureans be lamentably puzzled to give any tolerable account of many other appearances in nature, yet they nowhere discover so much weakness and ignorance, as when they come to discourse *De usu partium*, about the contrivance of the parts of mans body. Whose opinion is thus briefly delivered by Lucretius.

Lucret. l. 4.

Nil ideo quoniam natum est in corpore ut uti Possemus; sed quod natum est id procreat usum.

i. e. That no parts of mans body were designed for that use which they are employed for, but the parts by chance fell into that form they are in, and men by degrees brought them to their present use and serviceableness. An opinion at first view so strangely unreasonable, that we cannot think Epicurus should have ever embraced it, had it not unavoidably followed upon his Hypothesis of all things in the Universe resulting onely from a fortuitous concurrence of Atoms: According to which he supposed in man a different configuration of parts would happen, from the various agitation and concretion of those little particles which at first run together in the fashion of a man; and because that man had in him a more florid and vivacious Spirit, made up of the most subtle and moveable Atoms, thence motion came into the several parts suitable to the different conformation of them. And because those Atoms of which the soul is composed, are capable of sensation, thence it comes to pass, that it sees in the eye, hears in the ear, and smells in the nostrils. This is the most which is made of the opinion of Epicurus by the late sedulous vindicator of him, which yet himself calls *intoleranda opinio*; and it will appear to be so, not onely as contradicting what God himself hath delivered concerning man, but what reason its self will easily suggest

suggest from the consideration of the several parts of mans body. It must be confessed there were some Philosophers elder than *Epicurus*, who were much inclined to this opinion, as *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, *Anaxagoras* and others; yet we find those who more narrowly searched into the natures of living creatures, were thereby brought to acknowledge a divine providence which with a great deal of wisdom did order the several parts of animals, and adapted them to their peculiar uses. And although *Aristotle* in his Books *de Partibus Animalium*, hath said enough to refute the fond opinion of those Philosophers; yet none hath handled this argument with more exactness and accuracy, and with a more peculiar reflexion on *Epicurus*, than *Galen* hath done in his excellent piece *De usu partium*. Which *Gassendus* thinks *Galen* writ with a kind of *Enthusiasm* upon him (*adeo totum opus videtur conscriptum ενθουσιασμῳ*) Gassend. To. 2. lib. 2. sect. 3. and so that all those seventeen Books of his on that Subject, are a kind of 119. Psalm in Philosophy, or a perpetual Hymn upon the praise of the great Creator, a just Commentary on those words of the Psalmist, Psal. 139. 14. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.* In the entrance of those Books, *Galen* first shews the great variety of parts which is in several animals suitable to their several natures; the horse because of his swiftness and pride, hath the strongest hoofs and most curled main; the Lion because of his fierceness and courage hath his strength lying in his teeth and paws; the Bull in his horns, the Boar in his tusks; the Hart and Hare being timorous creatures, their parts are made fittest for flight: but man because he hath a principle of reason in him, hath no defensive, or offensive weapons in his body, but he hath hands to make use of both; which being joyned with, and imployed by his reason, far exceed all those advantages which any other creatures have, being imployed not onely to defend himself, but to build houses, make cloaths, arms, nets, whatever is useful for himself, or hurtful to those creatures which he hath command over; but because man was made for society and civil converse, therefore his hands were not onely imployed to defend himself or hurt other creatures, but for the mutual benefit and ad-

vantage of mankind; for by these were *Laws* written, *Temples* built, all instruments of *Arts* framed; by them we enjoy the benefit of others wits, we can discourse with *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Hippocrates*, and other ancients, though at such a distance from us. Now that the configuration of parts is not the cause of the use of them afterwards; as the *Lions* paw of his courage, the *Bulls* horns of his fierceness, or the slenderness of the *Hart* of its fearfulness; appears by this, because the young ones of the several kinds of animals, before their parts are grown up, strive to make the same use of them which the others do. As *Galen* saith, he had often seen a *Bull-calf* pushing with his head before any horns were grown out, and a *Colt* kicking when his hoofs were yet tender, and a young *Boar* defending himself with his jaws before he had any tusks, which is an evident argument that the parts were designed for the use, and not the use follow the parts. So, saith he, take three Eggs, one of an *Eagle*, another of a *Duck*, and a third of a *Serpent*, and after they are hatched through a moderate heat, we shall find when they are but newly hatched, the two first will be striving to fly before they have wings, and the third endeavouring to creep away on its belly; and if you breed them up to greater perfection, and bring them into the open Air, you will presently see the young *Eagle* mounting into the Air, the *Duck* quoddlings into a pool, and the *Serpent* creep under ground. Afterwards he comes particularly to handle the several parts of mans body, and first begins with the *Hand*, and shews in each part that it were impossible to have framed them with greater conveniency for their several uses than they have. The use of the hand is to take hold of any thing which man can use; now there being things of such different sizes which men may use, it had been impossible for the hand, if it had been one entire thing, and undivided, that it could have held things greater or lesser than its self, but it must have been equal to it. But now as the fingers are placed and divided, they are equally fit for laying hold of objects of any size or quantity; For the least things, as a *Barly* Corn, are taken up with the fore-finger and the thumb, things somewhat bigger are taken up by the same, but not by the extremities of them as before; things somewhat bigger than these,

with

with the *thumb*, *fore-finger*, and *middle-finger*, and so on by *degrees*, till at last the whole *hand* is *used*; so that the *division* of the *hand* into *fingers* is necessary. Neither were this enough, but the very *position* of the *fingers* as they are, is necessary too; for they had been *useless* if they had been all *divided* in a *right line*; for the firmest *hold* is either *circular*, or at least in two opposite points; but now this is *provided* for, by the *position* of the *thumb*, which may equally *joyn* with any of the *fingers* in taking hold of any thing. After this, he largely shews the particular *necessity* of the *softness*, *roundness* of the *flesh*, and *nails* on the *tops* of the *fingers*; and the special *usefulness* of these; and then comes to the *bones* of the *fingers*, how necessary they are for *firm hold*, and if there had been but *one bone* in each *finger*, they would have served onely for those *things* which we take up when they are *extended*; but now seeing they have *three* several *joynts*, they are fitted for all *kinds* of things; for when we *bow* our *fingers*, we use them as though they had no *bones* at all, and when we *stretch* them *out*, as though they were all but one *entire bone*; and the several *inflections* of the *joynts* serve for all *kind* of *figures*: and then he shews the *necessity* of the *flesh* within the *fingers*, and on either *side* of them, and *upon* them; and so with wonderful *accuracy* handles the *magnitude*, *number*, *figure* of the *bones*, and *nature* of the *joynts* of the *fingers*, and then the *tendons* and *muscles* belonging to the several *fingers*, which after he hath discoursed on through his *first Book*, he concludes it with the *manifest inconveniency* which would follow in the *hand*, were not every *thing* in it in that exact *magnitude*, *position*, and *figure* in which it is. With the same *exactness* he goes through all the *parts* of the *body*, handling in the *second Book* all that belongs to the *arm*, in the *third* the *legs*, in the *fourth* and *fifth* the *Organs* of *nutrition*, in the *sixth* and *seventh* the *lungs*, in the *eighth* and *ninth* the *head*, in the *tenth* the *peculiar* and *admirable* *fabrick* of the *eyes*, in the *eleventh* the other *parts* of the *face*, in the *twelfth* the *parts* of the *back*, and so in the *thirteenth*, in the *fourteenth* and *fifteenth* the *genitals*, in the *sixteenth* the *arteries*, *veins*, and *nerves*, and in the last the *peculiar disposition* and *figure* of all these *parts*, and the *usefulness* of the

Aristot. de
part. Anim.
l. I.

the whole design : Which is as great as can be in any work whatsoever, which is for us to take notice of the admirable wisdom of God in contriving the several parts of the body of man : So that, that whole book contains in it a most full and pregnant demonstration of a Deity, which every man carries about with him in the structure of his body, on which account men need not go out of themselves to find proof of a Deity, whether they consider their minds or their bodies, of which it may be more truly said than *Heraclitus* of old did of his *Stove*, *Etiam hic Dii sunt*. So that of all persons, I should most wonder at those whose employment particularly leads them to the understanding the parts and nature of mans body, if the proverb be not a great injury to them, since they have fuller insight into this demonstration of a Deity in the *Fabrick* of mans body, than many others who converse onely with some jejune and sapless writings. And certainly, what-ever is imagined to the contrary by men of weak understandings, the best way to cure the world of *Atheism*, is true Philosophy, or a search into the natures of things ; which the more deep and profound it is, the more impossible will it be found to explicate all the phenomena of nature by meer matter and motion. It was wisely observed of a great person and Philosopher, that a narrow and slight inspection into nature, inclined men of weak heads to *Atheism* ; but a more thorow-insight into the causes of things, made them more evidently see the necessary dependence of things on the great and wise Creator of them. A little knowledge of Philosophy is apt to make mens heads dizzy, and then in danger of falling into the gulf of *Atheism* : but a more careful and diligent view of it, brings them into sobriety and their right wits again. Such a slight inspection had the followers of *Epicurus* into the nature of things ; for when they found how in the present state of the world the various motion and configuration of the particles of matter would handsomely salve many appearances of nature, they, drunk with the success, reel presently into an Infinite space, and there imagine they behold infinite worlds made of the concretion of *Atoms*, and ever since their eyes have been so dusted with these little *Atoms*, that they could see nothing else in the world but them. Which how gross and unreasonable

able it is, will appear from our present subject; for who but *Lucretius* or *Epicurus* could ever think that our nostrils were at first fashioned as they are, merely by the violent impulse of the air within, which would force it self a passage out? But how came the air into the body before it was forced out? did it first break open the lips, make all that round cavity in the mouth, for a passage through the *aspera arteria*? but if when it was in, it would come out again, was not the mouth wide enough to let it go? or did the first man shut his mouth on purpose to find another vent for the air? if so, how chance the force of the air did not carry away the *epiglottis*? or if it got safely up to the nose, how came it not to force a passage out about the eyes rather than to go down so low first? But if we believe these rare contrivers of mans body, all the inward vessels of the body were made by the course of water, as channels are; but how is it possible, to imagine that the *Oesophagus* and the stomach should be so curiously contrived by the meer force of water? and that all the *Intestines* should be made onely as channels to let it out again when it was once in? but how comes then such a kind of reciprocation and *Peristaltick* motion in those vessels? how come the several coats of them to be so firm? if it had been onely a forced passage, it would have been direct and through the substance of the parts, as we find it to be in all forced passages in the body of the earth. Besides, if the water received into the stomach forced the passage through the guts, how comes it not to run in the channel it had made for it self? or did it not like that passage when other things came into it, and therefore found out a more secret one into the bladder? but if that were made by the water, how came it to be so full of membranes, and so subject to dilatation? Thus ridiculous will men make themselves, rather than shew themselves men in owning and adoring that infinitely wise and powerful God, who orders all things in the world according to the counsel of his Will. What can be more plain and evident than the peculiar usefulness of the several parts of mans body is? What other intent can be imagined that man is formed with a mouth, but onely for taking in of nourishment, and for receiving and letting forth of air? or that an infant is so ready to open his

mouth, but that there are *breasts* and *milk* for him to *suck* in order to his *nourishment*? Why should the *Oesophagus* be so hollow and the *stomach* so wide, but that one was provided for the better conveyance of the *meat* down, and the other for the *fermentation* of it? Whence come all the other *vessels* to be so conveniently placed, were it not for the *distribution* of *nourishment* into the several parts, or for *conveying* away the *excrements* of it? Can any one think that the several *muscles* and *tendons* should be placed in the more solid parts for any other end than for the better *motion* of them? or that the *nerves* should be derived from the *brain* into the several parts of the *body* for any other design than to be the *instruments* of *sense* and *motion*? or that the continual *motion* of the *heart* should be for any other purpose, than for *receiving* and *distribution* of the *blood* through the *arteries* into the parts of the *body*? or that the *eye* with all its curious *fabrick* should be onely *accidentally* employed in *seeing*? These things are so plain, that however the *Epicureans* may more easily lose themselves and deceive others in *explaining* the *appearances* of nature in some *inanimate beings*, yet when they come with their *blind* *concourse* of *Atoms* to give an *account* of the parts of *animals*, they miserably *befoo*l themselves and expose themselves onely to *contempt* and *pity*. It were easie to multiply *examples* in this kind, but I shall onely mention one thing more, which is, if all the parts of *mans* *body* have no higher *original* than the *concourse* of *Atoms* in the first *man* and *woman*, by what were the *umbilical* *vessels* formed whereby the *Child* in the *womb* receives its *nourishment*? by what *Atoms* was the passage of the *succus nutritius* framed from the *Mother* to the *Child*? how come those *vessels* to close up so naturally upon the *birth* of the *Child*, and it to seek its *nourishment* in quite another way? Will the *particles* of *matter* which by their *concretion* formed the first pair, salve this too? Thus still we see how *impossible* it is (to go no further than our *selves*) to give any tolerable *account* of things without an *infinite* power and *Being* which produced all these things, and hath left so plain an *inscription* of himself upon the works of nature, that none but those who shut their eyes can abstain from *seeing* it.

I come

I come now to the third evidence of a Deity, which is, that *SECT. 17.*
there are some beings in the world which cannot depend upon 3.
matter or motion, i.e. that there are some spiritual and im-
material substances or Beings (for if the thing be acknow-
 ledged, it is unbecoming a man to contend about words) the consequence of this for the proving a Deity, neither hath
been nor I suppose will be denied by such who question an
infinite Being, the same principles leading to the denying and
 the proof of both, and *immaterial Beings* being the strongest
 proof that there is something above matter in the world.
 If there be then such things in the World which matter and
 motion cannot be the causes of, then there are certainly spi-
 ritual and immaterial Beings, and that I shall make appear
 both as to the minds of men, and some extraordinary effects
 which are produced in the world.

I. I begin with the nature of the soul of man. And herein
 I must confine my self to those arguments which directly
 prove my present purpose, and on that account must quit all
 those common arguments to prove the souls immortality
 from the attributes of God; for all these do suppose the
 existence of a Deity as already evident; neither can I rely
 with safety on the way which some have taken to prove the
 immortality of the soul meerly from the phenomena of sensa-
 tion, which they endeavour to prove cannot be performed
 by meer matter and motion; for granting all this, yet the
 utmost that can be proved by it is no greater immortality in
 our souls than in the souls of Brutes; and in the sense in
 which that is admitted, I suppose an Epicurean will not de-
 ny the soul of man to be immortal; as Demonax in Lucian said,
 when he was asked whether the soul was immortal or no,
it is (said he) *but as all things else are*; for those who make
 the soul to be nothing but some more subtle and active par-
 ticles of matter, do not think that upon death they are an-
 nihilated, but that onely they are dispersed and dissipated, or
 in the Platonists phrase, may return to the soul of the world.
 These ways I cannot think to be sufficient probations of such
 a spiritual and immaterial Being in man which we now enquire
 for, much less can I make use of so precarious and infirm
 an hypothesis as pre-existence, which makes men apt to suspect

the cogency of such *reasons* which tend to prove the *immortality* of the *soul*, which are *linked* with a *supposition*, not onely *inevident* either to *sense* or *reason*, but likewise *needless* and *impertinent*. For I know no one *argument* which doth directly prove the *immateriality* of the *soul*, that doth in the least *infer* any *necessity* of *præ-existence*, but on the same *accounts* it will prove the *souls eternity*. Being therefore thus at *liberty* to *enquire* into the *nature* of the *soul* considered in her *self*, our onely way must be to find out such *peculiar properties* in the *soul* of *man*, which cannot be *salved* on *supposition*, there were nothing else but *matter* and *motion* in the *world*. Supposing then that all *sensation* in *man* doth arise from *corporeal motion* which is so strongly asserted by the *modern Philosophers*, and that the *highest conceptions* which depend on *sense* can amount no higher than *imagination*, which is evident: if it can then be proved that there is a principle of *action* in *man* which proceeds in a different way of operation than *sensation* doth, and that there are such operations of the *soul* which are not *imaginations*, it will be then clear that there is a principle in *man* higher than *matter* and *motion*. Now although it be a *task* sufficiently difficult to explain the *manner* of *sensation* it self in a meer *mechanical* way, supposing no higher principle than meer *matter*, yet it will appear far more difficult, nay impossible without a *spiritual* or *immaterial Being* to save such appearances in *man* which transcend the power of *imagination*; which will appear by these following operations of the mind which every one who hath it, may find within himself.

I. *Correcting the errors of imagination*. For if all our perceptions were nothing else but the *images* of *corporeal things* left in the *brain*, the *judgment* of the *mind* must of necessity be according to the *impressions* which are made upon the *Organs* of *sense*. But now if our *minds* can and do form *apprehensions* of things quite different from those which are conveyed by *sense*, there must be a *higher principle* of knowledge in *man* than *imagination* is. For which the common instance of the just *magnitude* of the *Sun* is very plain; If we judge according to the *image* which is conveyed to the *brain* by our *eyes*, we can never imagine the *Sun* to be bigger than
he

he seems to us to be ; nay though the *sight* be advantaged by the *help* of *Telescopes*, it cannot receive such an *Image* or *Idea* of the *Sun* which answers to its just *magnitude*, viz. that it is 160. times *bigger* than the *Earth*. From whence now comes this *apprehension* of the *bigneſs* of the *Sun* above that *proportion* which can poſſibly come in at our *senses* ? If it be ſaid, that by the *observation* of the *leſſening* of objects according to the *proportion* of *distance*, the *mind* may come to *underſtand* how much *bigger* the *Sun* may be than he ſeems, I grant it, but withall enquire how the *imagination* comes to have *proportions* and *distances*, which are meer *reſpects*, and can have no *corporeal phantaſms* whereby to be *repreſented* to it ; ſo that by this very way of *ratiocination* it is *evident*, that there is ſome *principle* in *man* beyond *imagination*. Again, when the *mind* by *ratiocination* hath proceeded thus far and finds the *Sun* to be ſo *great*, what *Idea* is there of this *magnitude* in the *mind* ? the *mind* cannot fix it ſelf on any *thing* but it muſt have an *Idea* of it ; from whence comes this *Idea* ? not from *corporeal phantaſms* ; for none of them could ever convey the due *magnitude* of the *Sun* to the *mind*, and therefore the *forming* of this *Idea* muſt be a pure *act* of *Intellection* which *corrects* the *errors* of *imagination*, and is a *principle* above it. So in the *sight* of a *ſtick*, when under *water*, the *representation* of it by the *ſenſe* to *imagination* is as *crooked* ; for *corporeal motion* carries things to the *eye*, without any *judgment* upon them ; the *eye* conveys the *image* to the *brain* ; and according to the *rules* of *corporeal perception* muſt preſently take every *thing* for *true* which is conveyed thither ; now from what *principle* is it that this *error* of our *senses* is *corrected* ? So in many other things wherein our *imaginati- ons* are quite *puzzled*, and when we go according to them, it is *impoſſible* to apprehend things as our *reason* tells us they are ; thus as to the *Antipodes* our *imaginati- ons* are wholly of the *mind* of the *Ancients*, that the *Antipodes* to us muſt needs be in *danger* of *knocking* their *heads* againſt the *Stars*, and if they go upon any *thing*, it muſt be their *heads*, and that that part of the *Heavens* which is in the other *Hemiſphere* is below us ; theſe are *pertinacious errors* of *imagination* while we adhere to that, and are onely *corrigible* by our *reason*, which makes

it evident to be otherwise. Besides, there are many *things* our *reason* and *understanding* inform us that they *may be*, and yet our *imaginations* can form no *Idea* of them; let an *Epicurean* Philosopher try the power of his *imagination* in his *Inane* or *Infinite empty space*, and he will soon find, that as strong as his *Phancy* is, it will soon tire and retreat as not being able to course through so *unimaginable* a *Space*. So for *eternal duration* our *reason* tells us the *thing* is possible, but when our *imaginations* begin to fardle up some *conceptions* of it, they are presently *tying* both ends together; which will make a strange *Idea* of *eternity*; the case is the same in the *infinite divisibility* of *quantity*, which *Epicurus* was somewhat aware of when he *denied* the *thing*. But how many *Mathematical Problems* are there which will jade our *imaginations* presently, and yet our *reason* stands still and assures us of the possibility of the things, as in *two lines* coming nearer still to each other, and yet never meeting, and in many other things, which most clearly evidence that there is a higher faculty in man which exceeds matter and motion, when it is able thus to correct the faults and to supply the defects of *imagination*.

Sect. 18.

2. *Reflex acts* of the mind upon it self argue a higher principle than *imagination*. That there are such things are evident to any one who hath any use of *cogitation*; and if any one doubt of it, his very *doubting* argues he hath *reflex acts*; for he could not doubt whether he had or no, but by *reflection* upon himself. Now that *reflex acts* should be caused through matter and motion, or through meer *imagination* is *unconceivable*. For we see no matter can act upon it self; indeed one part of *extended matter* may act upon another, but not purely upon it self; the *extremities* of the *fingers* can never feel themselves, though they may touch each other; neither can *imagination* reflect on it self; for that proceeding upon *corporeal Images*, must have such a representation from the senses of what it acts upon; now what *image* of it self can be conveyed to the *imagination* through the external *Organs* of sense? The eye may see through the motion of the objects of sight pressing upon it; but how can it see that it sees? so the *imagination* receives the *images* conveyed to the brain; but what

what *shop* hath it to make new ones in of it self, and so be guilty of the greatest Idolatry of worshipping its own Image? But though the *imagination* cannot thus reflect, yet we find such a principle within us that is very apt to retire into it self, and recollect things which could never have been conserved so long in that shop of shadows, the *Imagination*. For if *imagination* be nothing else but, as a modern Philosopher defines it, *conception remaining, and a little and little decaying* from and after the act of sense, like the motion of water after a stone is thrown into it, how is it possible that at so great a distance of years, as we commonly find, the image of a thing may be retrieved with as much facility and freshness as to circumstances, as if it were but new done? and that account which he gives of remembrance is very weak and insufficient when he tells us, that remembrance is nothing else but the missing of parts, which every man expecteth should succeed after they have a conception of the whole. For according to this, it is impossible for the men to retrieve any object without mutilation of it; and so there cannot possibly be a recollecting of all circumstances, when an object is once passed, and the motion begins to decay. But all this while, we understand nothing by what means this decaying motion should continue so long as our memory can fetch things back, or by what means an object when once passed, can be recovered again, if memory be nothing else but decaying motion. Such perplexities must needs arise, when men will undertake to save the inward operations of the soul by meer motion; but is it not evident that many times when the mind is employed about other things, some phantasms of things long ago past will come and present themselves to the mind with as much clearness as if new done? whereas if memory were decaying motion, the longer past, the more impossible would it be to recover any thing; but, do we not find that many old men will better remember the circumstances of many things they did in their Child-hood than a year or two before? Besides, we see what quickness and vivacity there is in our intellectual faculties above corporeal motion, with what facility the mind turns it self from one object to another, how suddenly it rangeth the whole world, how it trips over mountains, crosseth the ocean,

Hobs Humane nature, ch. 3. sect. 1.

mounts

mounts to the skies and at last quarreys upon it self, and all in the twinkling of an Intellectual eye? As quick as the eye of the body is, the mind far exceeds it, and can withdraw the imagination from attending the Organs of sense, thus do men who have their minds much fixed, fix their eyes too; and yet afterwards can scarce tell themselves what they have looked on all that while. Sometimes the mind fits and compares phantasms together, and sports it self in sorting them into several ranks and orders, and making matches between such things which are sure to have no affinity with each other, which are thence called *entia rationis* or the creatures of the mind. And can all these and many other such operations which men are conscious to themselves of, be nothing else but the motion of some flegmatick matter, the reaction of the brain, and the meer effects of imagination?

3. The profound speculations of the mind argue a power far above imagination and corporeal motion. I wonder how Epicurus his soul, when if we believe him, it was made up of Atoms, could ever imagine an Infinite Vacuity? Could meer Atoms ever dispute whether they were Atoms or no? For I doubt not but Epicurus was fain to argue much against himself, before he could perswade himself to so stupendious a piece of folly. Were there nothing in man but meer corporeal motion, whence came the dispute, whether the soul were corporeal or no? Can Atoms frame Syllogisms in mood and figure? and meer matter argue pro and con, whether it be matter or something else? What kind of aerial particles were their souls compounded of, who first fancied themselves to be immaterial? What strange agitations of matter were those which first made men think of an eternal state? which thoughts have ever since so stuck upon these little spherical bodys, that they could never yet disburden themselves of them: Whence come such amazing fears, such dreadful apprehensions, such sinking thoughts of their future condition in minds that would fain ease themselves by believing, that death would put a period both to soul and body? Whence on the other side come such encouraging hopes, such confident expectations, such comfortable prepossessions of their future state, in the souls of good men, when their bodys are nearest

nearest to the grave? *Seneca*, who was somewhat dubious sometimes as to the future condition of the soul, yet could tell his dear *Lucilius* with what pleasure he could think of it; and could elsewhere say of the soul, *Et hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suæ quod illum divina delectant, nec ut alienis interest sed ut suis*: the soul had that mark of Divinity in it, that it was most pleased with Divine speculations, and conversed with them as with matters which nearly concerned it. And when it hath once viewed the dimensions of the Heavens, contemnit domicilii prioris angustias, it was ashamed of the cottage it dwelt in; nay, were it not for these speculations, non fuerat opera precium nasci, it had not been worth while for the soul to have been in the body; and as he goes on, detrahe hoc inestimabile bonum, non est vita tanti ut sudem, ut æstnem. Could there be now so great an Epicurism in contemplation, were the soul of man of *Epicurus* his mould, a meer complexion of Atoms? would dull and heavy matter ever have delighted to have searched so much into the causes of things, to have gone over the world in its speculations, and found more sweetness in knowledge, than the little Epicure the Bee tastes in his choicest flowers? *Epicurus* his own Philosophy is a demonstration against himself; if his soul had not been of a purer nature than he fancied, he would never have made his study of Philosophy a part of his Epicurism? had his soul been such Atoms as he fancied, when his brain had been well heated at his study, those more vivid and spirituous particles, like the spirits of wine had been in danger of evaporation, and leaving the more lumpish matter to compleat his work. Of all persons, I most admire that Philosophers, who make so much use of their understandings, should so ungratefully requite them, and serve them like old horses, when they have made them do all the service they could, turn them into the high-ways, and let them die in a ditch. But yet all Philosophers have not been so unthankful, some have understood the worth of their soul, and asserted it, if they have not used too high, i. e. Platonical expressions of it; making it a particle not of matter, but of the Divine nature it self, a little Deity in a Cottage, that staves here a while and returns

*Præf. ad Quæst.
Natur.*

to that upper *Region* from whence it came. As *Manilius* speaks,

Manil. l. 4.

*An dubium est habitare Deum sub pectore nostro,
In cælumque redire animas, cœloque venire ?*

And while the *soul* is here in its cage, it is continually fluttering up and down, and delighteth to look out now at this part, and then at another, to take a view by degrees of the whole *Universe*, as the same *Poet* goes on,

*Quid mirum noscere mundum
Si possunt homines, quibus est & mundus in ipsis :
Exemplumque Dei quisque est in imagine parva ?*

The *soul* hath nothing more delightful to it than knowledge, and no knowledge so pleasing and satisfactory as of him whose image and superscription it bears, who makes himself most known to such as enquire after him ;

*Seque ipsum inculcat & offert
Ut bene cognosci possit.*

I conclude this with that of *Seneca*, in that excellent Preface to his natural questions ; *O quam contempta res est homo nisi supra humana se erexerit !* what a pitiful thing is man, were it not that his soul was apt to soar above these earthly things ? And by this aptness to soar so high above these *terrene objects*, and to converse with so much freedom with *spiritual Beings*, as well as *abstracted notions*, we may certainly infer, that our *rational souls* are of a far more noble and refined nature, than that more *feculent principle* of *imagination* which always converses in *face Romuli*, and can go no further than our *senses* carry it. And thus I have made good the first proof, that there is something above matter and motion in the world, which is from that *immaterial Being* which is in man.

Se7. 19.
2.

The next evidence which we have of a *Being* above matter and

and motion, is from the extraordinary effects which have been in nature. I speak not now meerly of such things which by their natures and effects are manifested to proceed from some Beings which bear ill will to mankind, multitudes of which are related by men Philosophical and inquisitive, with such enumerations of circumstances, and particular evidences, that they are not meer impostures, that one may on the same grounds question any matter of fact which himself did not see, as such relations which are delivered by persons without interest or design, and such as were able to judge of the truth of circumstances; such are both ancient and modern Philosophers, Physicians, States men, and others. Neither shall I insist on such prodigies, which oft times presage revolutions in States, if we believe Machiavel himself, who in a whole Chapter designedly proves it: and professeth himself utterly to seek for the causes of them, unless they may be attributed to some spirits and Intelligences in the air which give the world notice of such things to come. But those things which I suppose have the most clear and undoubted evidence of true and undoubted miracles (the matters of fact being affirmed by eye-witnesses, who sealed the truth of them with their lives) are those recorded in the holy Scriptures; which there are only two ways to evade, either by questioning the truth of the things, which I suppose in the precedent book we have proved with as much rational evidence as any thing of that nature is capable of, or else that the things therein recorded might be salved without a Deity. For which only two ways have been excogitated by Atheistical spirits, either attributing them to the power and influence of the Stars, the foundations of which fond and absurd opinion have been taken away by those many writers, who have rationally confuted the whole Art of Judicial Astrology, or else that they are done by the meer power of imagination, which is the way of Avicenna and some other Arabick Writers, which is so wild an effect of the power of imagination, that nothing doth so much demonstrate the irregular motions of it, as such an opinion doth; and is sufficiently derided and refuted by Pomponatius himself.

*Disput. l. II
c. 56.*

*V. D. H. Mo'es.
Mysterie of
Godliness, l. 7.
c. 14, 15, 16, 17.*

Now then, it being an acknowledged principle in nature, that every thing continues in the course it is in, till something more powerful put it out; if then such things have been in the world, which have been real alterations of the course of nature, as the Suns standing still in the time of Joshua, then there must be something above matter and motion, and consequently, there is a God.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Origine of the Universe.

The necessity of the belief of the creation of the world in order to the truth of Religion. Of the several Hypotheses of the Philosophers who contradict Moses : with a particular examination of them. The ancient tradition of the world consonant to Moses : proved from the Ionick Philosophy of Thales, and the Italick of Pythagoras. The Pythagorick Cabbala rather Egyptian than Mosaick. Of the fluid matter which was the material principle of the Universe. Of the Hypotheses of the eternity of the world asserted by Ocellus Lucanus, and Aristotle. The weakness of the foundations on which that opinion is built. Of the manner of forming principles of Philosophy. The possibility of creation proved. No arguing from the present state of the world against its beginning, shewed from Maimonides. The Platonists arguments from the goodness of God for the eternity of the world answered. Of the Stoical Hypothesis of the eternity of matter ; whether reconcileable with the text of Moses. Of the opinions of Plato and Pythagoras concerning the præexistence of matter to the formation of the world. The contradiction of the eternity of matter to the nature and attributes of God. Of the Atomical Hypothesis of the Origine of the Universe. The World could not be produced by a casual concurrence of Atoms proved from the nature and motion of Epicurus his Atoms, and the Phenomena of the Universe, especially the production and nature of Animals. Of the Cartesian Hypothesis, that it cannot solve the Origine of the Universe without a Deity giving motion to matter.

THE Foundations of Religion being thus established in Sect. 1.
the Being of God, and the immortality of the soul, we now come to erect our superstructure upon them, by asserting the undoubted truth and certainty of that account of the
H h h 3 world

world which is given us in the writings of *Moses*. Which beginning with the world it self, leads us to a particular consideration of the *Origine* of the *Universe*, the right understanding of which hath very great influence upon our belief of all that follows in the *Word of God*. For although we should assert with *Epicurus* the *Being* of a *Deity*, if yet with him we add that the world was made by a casual concurrence of *Atoms*, all that part of *Religion* which lies in obedience to the *Will of God* is unavoidably destroyed. All that is left, is only a kind of *Veneration* of a *Being* more excellent than our own, which reacheth not to the government of mens lives, and so will have no force at all upon the generality of the world, who are only allured by hopes, or awed by fears, to that which of their choice they would be glad to be freed from. Besides, what expressions of gratitude can be left to *God* for his goodness, if he interpose not in the affairs of the world? what dependence can there be on divine goodness, if it be not at all manifested in the world? what apprehensions can we have of *Gods* infinite wisdom and power, if neither of them are discernable in the *Being* of the world? And as the opinion of *Epicurus* destroys *Religion*, so doth that of *Aristotle* which attributes eternity to the *Universe*, and a necessary emanation of it from the first cause, as light comes from the *Sun*; for if so, as *Maimonides* well observes, the whole *Religion* of *Moses* is overthrown, all his miracles are but impostures, all the hopes which are grounded on the Promises of *God*, are vain and fruitless. For if the world did of necessity exist, then *God* is no free agent; and if so, then all instituted *Religion* is to no purpose; nor can there be any expectation of reward, or fear of punishment from him who hath nothing else to do in the world, but to set the great wheel of the *Heavens* going. So much is it our concernment to enquire into the true *Original* of the world; and on what evidence of reason those opinions are built, which are so contrary to that account given of it in the very entrance of the *Books* of *Moses*. Wherein we read the true *Origine* of the world to have been by a production of it by the omnipotent *Will* and *Word* of *God*. This being then the plain assertion of *Moses*, we come to compare it in point of reason, with all those several *Hypotheses*.

More Nevoch.
p. 2. cap. 25.

theses which are repugnant to it, which have been embraced in several ages by the Philosophers of greatest esteem in the world. Which may be reduced to these four: 1. Such as suppose the world to have existed as it is from all eternity. 2. Such as attribute the formation of the world as it is to God: but withal assert the præ-existence and eternity of matter. 3. Such as deny any eternity to the world, but assert the Origine of it to have been by a casual concurrence of Atoms. 4. Such as endeavour to explain the Origine of the Universe and all appearances of nature, meerly by the Mechanical Laws of the motions of matter.

I begin with those who asserted the eternity of the world as Sect. 2.

it is, among whom Aristotle hath born the greatest name; who seems to have arrogated this opinion to himself; for when he enquires into the judgement of the Philosophers, who had writ before him, he sayes of them, ἡρώμενον μὲν ἐν ἀπαντες ἔει' φασιν, all the Philosophers asserted that the world was made, though some one way, some another. And were this true which Aristotle saith, it would be the strongest prejudice against his opinion; for if the world had been eternal, how should it come to pass, that the eldest Philosophers should so readily and unanimously embrace that opinion which asserted the production of the world? Was it not a strong presumption of the Novity of the Universe, that all Nations to whom the Philosophers resorted had memorials left among them of the first Origine of things? And from hence it is observable, that when the humour of Philosophizing began to take the Greeks (about the XL. Olympiad when we may suppose Thales to flourish) the beginning of the world was no matter of dispute, but taking that for granted, the enquiry was out of what material principle the Universe was formed; of which Thales thus delivers his opinion in Tully; *aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret*; wherein he plainly distinguisheth the efficient from the material cause of the world. The prime efficient was God, the material principle, water. It is a matter of some enquiry, whether the first principles of Philosophy among the Greeks, were not rather some traditional things conveyed to them from others, than any certain Theories which

Aristot. de cæl.
l. I. cap. 10.

De Nat. Deor.
l. I. cap. 25.

which they had formed from their own *experiments* and *observations*. The former is to me far the more *probable* on many *accounts*, but chiefly on this, that the *first principles* of the two founders of the chief *sects* of *Philosophers*, viz. the *Ionick* and *Italic* (for all the other were but the various *issues* of these two) did come so near to that which we have the greatest *reason* to believe to have been the most certain *account* of the *Origine* of the world. For this opinion of *Thales* seems to have been part of that *Universal tradition* which was continued in the world concerning the *first principles* of things : For I do not see any reason to aver with so much confidence, as some do, that those *Philosophers* who spake any thing consonantly to *Moses*, must presently *converse* with the *Jews*, transcribe their *opinions* out of the *Scriptures*, or have them conveyed to them in some secret *Cabbala* of the *Creation*, as it is affirmed of *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, and may with no less reason of *Thales*. But this I suppose may be made evident to any considerative person, that those *Philosophers* of *Greece*, who conversed most abroad in the world, did speak far more agreeably to the true *account* of things, than such who only endeavoured by their own *wits* to improve or correct those principles which were delivered by the other *Philosophers*. Which I impute not so much to their converse with the *Mosaick writings*, as to that *universal tradition* of the first ages of the world, which was preserved far better among the *Phœnicians*, *Egyptians*, *Chaldeans*, and others than among the *Greeks*. For which we have this evident *reason*, that *Greece* was far more *barbarous* and *rude* in its elder *times*, than those other *Nations* were, which had means of preserving some *monuments* and general reports of the first ages of the world, when the *Greeks* wanted them. And therefore we find that *Greece* from its beginning shined with a borrowed light ; and saw not by an extramission of rays of knowledge from it self, but by an intromission of those representations of things which were received from other *Nations*. Those who formed *Greece* first into civil societies, and licked it into the shape of well ordered *Common-wealths*, were such who had been traders for knowledge into foreign parts. To which purpose

pose *Diodorus Siculus* informs us that *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, as well as the Poets *Orpheus*, *Musæus*, *Melampus* and *Homer*, and the Philosophers afterwards, *Pythagoras*, *Plato* and others, had gained most of their knowledge and wisdom out of *Ægypt*; nay, he saith in general, ὅτι τῶν παρ' ἑλλήσι δεδεδασμένων οὗτοι συνέσι καὶ παιδείᾳ, παρέβαλον εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις χρόνοις, ἵνα οἱ ἐν ταῦθα νομίμων καὶ αἰδέας μεταχρῶσιν. All those who were renowned among the Greeks for wisdom and learning, did in antient time resort to *Ægypt*, to be acquainted with their Laws and knowledge. On this account therefore we are not to seek for the antient and genuine tradition of the world from the native and home-bred Greeks, such as *Aristotle* and *Epicurus*, but from those who took the pains themselves to search into those records which were preserved among the elder and more knowing Nations; And although the Nations they resorted to, sought to advance their own reputation in the histories of their antient times, of which we have already given a large account, yet they were more faithful in the account which they gave of the Origine of the whole Universe. For it appears from *Diogenes Laertius*, that the *Egyptians* did constantly believe, that the world had a beginning, and was corruptible; that it was spherical, and the Stars were of the nature of fire; that the soul was of an immortal nature, and did pass up and down the World. Which *Laertius* cites from *Hecataeus* and *Aristagoras*. So that we need not make *Pythagoras* acquainted with such a Cabbala of the Creation, which in all probability neither the Jews nor he ever dreamt of; we find a fair account may be given of most of the opinions of *Pythagoras*, and whence he derived them, without forcing the words of *Moses* into such a sense, which the plainness and perspicuity of the writings of *Moses*, argue them not capable to admit of. But I will not deny from those concurrent testimonies of *Hermippus* and *Aristobulus*, besides *Origen*, *Porphyrie*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and others, that *Pythagoras* might have had opportunity of conversing with the Jews, (which it is most probable was in *Chaldæa* after the Captivity, at which time *Pythagoras* was there among them) but that *Pythagoras* should converse with the successors of *Elisha* on mount *Carmel*, as *Vossius*

Biblioth. l. i. v.
Euseb. Præp.
Evangel. l. 10.

Diog. Laert.
proxim. p. 7.

V. Selden de
jure nat. &
gent. apud E-
braeos. l. i. c. 2.

Voss. de Seſſis
Philosoph. c. 6.
ſect. 5.

thinks; or that *Moschus* the *Sidonian Philosopher* in *Iamblichus* should be *Moses*, as others fancy; or that *præ-existence* of *souls* should be part of the *Mosaick Cabbala*; or that the *Pythagorick* numbers, as they are explained by *Nicomachus Gerasenus* in *Photius*, should be adequate to the days of the *Creation Cabbalistically* understood, are fancies too extravagant and *Pythagorean*, to be easily embraced. If *Pythagoras* was circumcised, it was more for love of the *Agyptians* than the *Jews*, among whom he spent his twenty two years; if *præ-existence* of *souls* be a rational hypothesis, we may thank the *Agyptians* for it, and not *Moses*; if numbers be so expressive of the work of *Creation*, we are beholding to the *Arithmetical Hieroglyphicks* of *Agypt* for them. But although *Pythagoras* might not be acquainted with such a *Philosophick Cabbala* of the *Creation*, which none of the *Jews*, as far as we can find, understood, till one more versed in *Plato* and *Pythagoras* than in the learning of his own Nation, viz. *Philo* of *Alexandria*, began first to exercise his wit on the text of *Moses*, with *Platonick notions*; yet I shall easily grant that *Pythagoras* by means of his great industry and converse with the learned Nations, might attain to far greater knowledge of many mysterious things in natural Philosophy, and as to the *Origine* of the *Universe*, than any of the *Home-bred Philosophers* of *Greece*, or it may be than any one of the Nations he resorted to, because he had the advantage of comparing the several accounts of them together, and extracting out that which he judged the best of them.

V. Mathem.
Hieroglyph.
Kircheri.
Tō. 3. Oedip.
Ægypt.

Plutarch. de
Plat.
Philos. l. 1.
ſap. 3.

And hence *Plutarch* tells us, that the first principles of the world according to *Pythagoras*, were these two, the one was τὸ πᾶντικὸν αἰτίον ἢ εἰδικόν (ὅπερ ἐστὶ νῦν ὁ θεὸς) an active and forming principle, and that was *God* whom he called *Mind* (as *Anaxagoras* likewise did) the other was τὸ παθητικόν τε ἢ ὕλικόν (ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὁ ὁρατὸς κόσμος) passive and material, which is the visible world.

ſect. 3.

And thus we see these two renowned founders of the *Ionick* and *Italic* societies of *Philosophers*, both giving their concurrent Testimony with *Moses* as to the true *Origine* of the world, and not at all differing from each other; for thus

V. Thales.

Thales speaks in *Diogenes Laertius*, περιβαλεται τὸ ὄντων θεός, ἀνιμντα

ἀγνῆτον ὃς, καλλίστον κόσμος, πῶμα ὃς Θεῶ. God is the eldest Being because unbegotten, the world the most beautiful, because it is Gods workmanship. To which those expressions of Plato in his *Timæus* come very near (whose Philosophy was for substance the same with the *Pythagorean*) when he had before ascribed the production of the world to the goodness of God, which goodness of his did incline him to make all other things like himself. *Θεὸς δὲ ἦν ἔτ' ὅτι τῷ αἰετῷ ἀεὶ ἄλλο πλὴν τὸ καλλίστον.* For the most excellent Being cannot but produce the most excellent effects. And as to the material principle out of which the world was made, there appears no great difference between the ὕδωρ of *Thales*, and the ὕλη of *Plato* and *Pythagoras*; for *Plato*, when he tells us what a kind of thing the material principle was, he describes it thus, *ἢ ἢ πύ- χαν ἄρην ἀλλὰ κινεῖσθαι πλεμμελῶς καὶ ἀτόκως*, which as *Chalcid. Ti-* *cidius* renders it, is *motu importuno fluctuans neque unquam* *quiescens*; it was a visible corporeal thing (πάν ὅσον ἦν ὅσα τὸν) *ed. Meurf.* which was never at rest, but in continual disorderly motion and agitation: which is a full explication, I suppose, of what *Thales* meant by his water, which is the same with that ἰλύς or mixture of mud and water together, which others speak of as the Principle of the Universe; as *Orpheus* in *Athenagoras*, and the Scholiast on *Apollonius* cited by *Grotius* and others. Which we have the more reason to believe, because the successors of *Thales*, *Anaximander* and *Anaxagoras*, express themselves to that purpose. *Anaximander* called the Sea ὁ πρῶτος ὑγρασίας λείψανον, the remainder of the Primitive moisture: and *Anaxagoras* says before the Νῆς, or God set things in their order, πάντα χεῖματα ἦν ὅμῃ περυσσάμενα, all things were at first confused together: which must needs make that which *Chalcidius* tells us *Numenius* attributes to *Pythagoras*, which his translator calls *Sylvam fluidam*, or fluid matter. *Chalcid. in* Which is the same likewise with the *Phœnicians* Μῶτ, which *Tim. p. 394.* as appears by *Eusebius*, some call ἰλὺν, others, ὑλατώδεις μίξεις οὐκ ὄν, some mud, or slime, others the putrefaction of watery mixtures, which they say was ποτὶ κλίπῃς καὶ γένεσις ὄλων, the seed-plot of the Creation and the generation of things. Thus we see how *Thales* with the *Phœnicians* from whom he was derived, as *Laertius* tells us and *Pythagoras*, with the *Ægypt-*

Annot. in l. 1.
de Verit.
Christ. Relig.

Euseb. Prep.
Evang. l. 1.
c. 10.

Gen. 1. 2.

Chalcid. in
Tem. p. 378.Sceptical Chy-
mist. p. 115.
&c.

Iliad. ε.

Odyss. ε.
Chalcid. p.
178.

tians and others concur with *Moses*, not only in the production of the world, but in the manner of it, wherein is expressed a fluid matter which was the material principle out of which the world was formed, when we are told that the earth was without form and void, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, i. e. that all at first was but fluid matter; for *P. Fagius* from *R. Kimchi* renders פרוך by ὕλη, which fluid matter was agitated and moved by the Divine Spirit, or the vis plastica mundi, so *Chrysostom* calls it ἐπερεια ζωνική: and so *Drusius*, and *P. Fagius* explain פרוך by motion or agitation. And herein we have likewise the consent of those fore-named excellent Philosophers, who attribute the Origine of particular things in the world to this agitation or motion of the fluid matter. For *Chalcidius* speaking not only of *Thales*, *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, but of *Anaximenes*, *Heraclitus*, and others, sayes thus of them, omnes igitur hi—in motu positam rerum originem censuerunt: they all agreed in this, that the Origine of things was to be ascribed to the motion of the parts of matter. So the *Phœnicians* called this motion of the particles of matter αἶσα ῥοαῖα καὶ ποσειδάων a dark and blustering wind. And how suitable this explication of the Origine of things from the motion of fluid matter is to the history of nature, appears by those many experiments by which mixt bodies are shewed to spring from no other material principle than the particles of fluid matter. Of which you may read a discourse of that ingenious and learned Gentleman *Mr. Boyle* in his *Sceptical Chymist*. Only thus much may here suffice to have made it appear, that all those Philosophers, who were most inquisitive after the antient and genuine tradition of the world concerning the first beginning of things, did not only concur with *Moses* in the main thing, that its beginning was from God, but in the particular circumstances of it, as to the fluid matter and the motion thereof. Concerning which I may yet add, if it be material, the Testimony of *Homer* in *Plutarch*.

Ωκεανὸς, ὅσπερ γένεσις πάντεσσιν τέτυκτο.

And in *Chalcidius*: Inque eadem sententia *Homerus* esse invenitur, cum *Oceanum* & *Thetin* dicat parentes esse geniturae, cumque

cumque iurjurandum Deorum constituat aquam, quam quidem V. Mewf. in ipse appellat Stygem, antiquitati tribuens reverentiam, & jure Chal. p. 37. jurando nihil constituens reverentius. To which purpose like Metaphys. l. 1. c. 3. wife Aristotle speaks in his *Metaphysics*, that the reason why Styx was made the oath of the Gods, was because water was supposed to be the material principle of things, which he saith was ἀρχαία τις αὐτῇ καὶ παλαιὰ περὶ τῆς οὐσείας δοξά, a most antient tradition concerning the Origine of the Universe. And tells us before, that some were of opinion τοὶ παμπάλαιος, καὶ πολὺ πρὸ τῆς νῦν ῥησεως καὶ πρῶτος θεολογῆσαντας, that the most antient and remote persons and first writers of Theology held this opinion of water being the first material principle of things.

Having thus made it appear what a consent there was between the antient tradition of the world, and the writings of Moses concerning the Origine of the world; I now come to consider upon what pretence of reason this tradition came to be contradicted, and the eternity of the world asserted. For which we are to consider, that the difference of the former Philosophers of the Ionick sect, after the time of *Thales*, as to the material principle of the world, one substituting air, another fire instead of water, rendred the tradition its self suspected among other Philosophers; especially when the humor of innovating in Philosophy was got among them, and they thought they did nothing unless they contradicted their Masters; thence came that multiplicity of Sects presently among them, and that Philosophy which at first went much on the original tradition of the world, was turned into disputes and altercations, which helped as much to the finding out of Truth, as the fighting of two Cocks on a dunghil doth to the finding out the Jewel that lies there. For which, scraping and searching into the natures of things had been far more proper than contentions and wranglings with each other; but by means of this litigious humour, Philosophy from being a design grew to be a meer Art, and he was accounted the best Philosopher, not that searched further into the bowels of nature, but that dressed and tricked up the notions he had in the best posture of defence against all who came to oppose him. From hence those opinions were most plausible, not

which were most *true*, but which were most *defensible*, and which like *Des-Cartes* his *second element*, had all the *Angles* cut off, on which their *adversaries* might have an *advantage* of *justling* upon them, and then their *opinions* were accounted most *pure* when they are so *spherical*, as to pass up and down without *interruption*. From such a *degeneracy* of *Philosophy* as this we have now mentioned, arose the *opinion* of the *eternity* of the *world*; for the certain *tradition* of the *world* being now *lost* in a *crowd* of *Philosophers*, whose main *aim* was to set up for themselves, and not to *trade* with the *common-bank*, so that there could be no *certain* and *convictive* evidence given to a *shuffling* *Philosopher* that *things* were ever otherwise than they are; they found it most *defensible* to assert that the *world* never had a *beginning*, nor would have an *end*, but always *did*, and would *continue* in the *State* they were in. This *opinion*, though *Aristotle* seems to make all before him to be of another mind, yet was *hatched*, as far as we can find, at first, under *Pythagoras* his successors by *Ocellus Lucanus*, as appears by his *book* still extant, *μετὰ τὴν ἑκτατὴν φύσιν* of the nature of the *Universe*; to whom *Aristotle* hath not been a little beholding, as *Ludov. Nogarola* hath in part manifested in his *Notes* on *Ocellus*, although *Aristotle* had not the *ingenuity* of *Pliny*, *agnoscere per quos profecerit*. From *Aristotle* this *opinion* together with his name, spread it self much farther, and became the *opinion* most in *vogue* among the *Heathen Philosophers*, especially after the rise of *Christianity*; for then not onely the *Peripateticks*, but the modern *Platonists*, *Plotinus*, *Apuleius*, *Taurus*, *Iamblichus*, *Alcinous*, *Proclus* and others, were all engaged in the *defence* of the *eternity* of the *world*, thinking thereby the *better* to overthrow *Christianity*. Hence came the hot and eager *contests* between *Proclus*, *Simplicius*, and *Philoponus*, who undertook to answer *Proclus* his eighteen arguments for the *eternity* of the *world*, and to charge *Aristotle* with self-contradiction in reference to it. But nothing were they more troubled about, than to reconcile the *Timæus* of *Plato* with the *eternity* of the *world*, which they made to be a meer *Hypothesis*, and a kind of a *Diagramme* to *salve* *providence* withall; although the plain words of *Plato*

not

not onely there, but elsewhere do exprefs, as far as we can judge by his way of writing, his real judgment to have been for the production of the world by God. For which purpose we have this observable *Testimony* in his *Sophista*, where he divides all manner of productions of things into *divine* and *humane*, and opposes the opinion that conceived all things to be produced by an *eternal power*, to the opinion of the *vulgar*, which saith he, was ἡ οὖσαν αὐτὰ γὰρ αὐτὰ πῶς αἰτίας αὐτὰ αἰτίας καὶ θεοῦ δαμονίας οὐσίας, that all things were produced by a blind force of nature without any reason or counsel, to which he opposeth the other opinion, that they are made καὶ λόγῳ τε καὶ σοφίᾳς θείας καὶ θεῶν μηχανῶν, by a divine power with infinite reason and wisdom, and when *Theatetus* expresseth himself in an *Academical* way as to either of these opinions, the *hospes Eleatenfis*, who there acts the part of the *Philosopher*, tells him, if he thought he were inclinable to the other opinion, νῦν ἂν τῷ λόγῳ καὶ παιδὲς ἀναγκαίως ἐπιχειρῶναι πείν ὁμολογεῖν. He would undertake to make him confess the contrary by the evidence of reason which he would bring. And we shall see what great reason there is for this opinion, when we consider what weak and infirm foundations the contrary is built upon. For all the arguments which either *Ocellus*, or *Aristotle*, or the modern *Platonists* make use of, are built on these following suppositions which are all false. 1. That it is unconceivable that things should ever have been in any other state than they are. 2. That there is no other way of production but by Generation. 3. That God is no free agent, but produceth the world by necessity of nature.

1. That it is unconceivable that things should ever have been any otherwise than they are. The reason of which supposition was this, that the general conclusions of reason, which they proceed upon in *Philosophy*, were taken up from the observation of things as they are at present in the world. Which is evident from the ground of *Aristotles* condemning the opinion of *Empedocles*, who asserted the production of the world, and yet the incorruptibility of it: τὸ μὲν ἔν γε γένεσσι μὲν, αἰδῶν δ' ὅμως ἔστι θάνατος καὶ ἀφάνεια, which he accounts impossible and gives this as his reason, μόνον γὰρ τοῦτε θεῶν εὐλόγηται, ὅτι ἐπὶ πάντων ἡ πάντα ἀφ' ὧν καὶ κατασκευάζεται. For, saith he, nothing else but God is praised, because he is praised in all things, from which all things are made. *can*

Platon. Sophist. p. 185. ed. Ficini.

Sect. 5.

Arist. de celo l. 1. cap. 10.

can be rationally asserted, but what we find to be in all things or at least in most; now because there could nothing be found in the world which was produced (i. e. by generation) and yet was incorruptible, therefore he concludes it impossible it should be so, with the Universe. By which we evidently see what the grand principles of reason among the Philosophers were: viz. such observations as they had made from the present course of nature in the order of the Universe. From hence arose that strong presumption among them, which hath been so taken for granted, that it hath been looked on as a common notion of humane nature, viz. *ex nihilo nihil fit*, which was the main argument used by them to prove the eternity of the world: and by others to prove the præexistence of matter. So Ocellus argues against both the dissolution and production of the world from this principle, If the world be dissolved, saith he, it must either be ἢ τοῖς εἰς τὸ ὄν, ἢ εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν, either into that which is, or into that which is not; it cannot be dissolved into that which is, because then the Universe cannot be destroyed; for that which is, is either the Universe or a part of it: neither can it be dissolved into that which is not, ἀμύχαρον γὰρ τὸ ὄν εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν, ἢ εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν ἀναλυθῆναι. For it is impossible that a thing should be made out of that which is not, or be dissolved into nothing. And Aristotle somewhere tells us, that it is a principle which all the writers of natural Philosophy are agreed in (ὅτι γὰρ πάντες ὁμολογῶμεν ὅτι τῆς οὐκ ὄντος ἀπαντες οἱ περὶ τῆς φύσεως) which is ἐκ μὴ ὄντων γίνασθαι ἀδύνατον, that it is impossible for any thing to come out of nothing. But now when we observe upon what grounds this Principle was took up by these Philosophers, we have no reason to admit of it as an Universal standard of nature. For we find by these Naturalists, who thus asserted this principle, that when they go about to prove it, it is only from the course of Generations in the world, or from the works of Art, both which suppose matter præ-existent, and from these short collections they form this universal Maxime. And from hence when they discoursed of the manner whereby God did produce the world, their imaginations ran presently upon that which the Epicurean in Tully enquires after, *quæ motio? quæ ferramenta? qui vectes? quæ machinæ? qui ministri*

V. Laer. in vit.
Democriti.

Ocellus Lucanus
p. 16. ed.
Commel.

Physic. I. 4.

De Nat. I. 1.

nistri

nistri tanti operis fuerunt? they apprehend God onely as an Artificer that contrives the World first into a platform, and then useth instruments to erect it, and consequently still suppose the matter ready for him to work upon. So true is that of *Balbus* in *Tully* when he comes to discourse of the nature of God; *in quo nihil est difficilius quam à consuetudine oculorum aciem mentis abducere*; nothing is more difficult than to abstract our minds from the observations of this visible world when we seek to apprehend the Nature of the Deity. Thus we see upon what general grounds the Philosophers proceeded, and from what they took them, and how insufficient any collections from the present order of the Universe are to determine any thing concerning its production by. For supposing a production of the world, several things must of necessity be supposed in it, different from what the present order of the world is; and it is an unreasonable thing to argue from a thing when it is in its greatest perfection, to what must always have been in the same thing; for by this means we must condemn many things for falsities which are apparently true, and believe many others to be true which are apparently false. For which *Maimonides* useth an excellent similitude. Suppose, saith he, one of exquisite Natural parts, whose Mother dies as soon as he is born, and his Father brings him up in an Island, where he may have no society with mankind till he be grown up to years of understanding, and that he never saw any female of either man or beast: Suppose now this person to enquire of the first man he speaks with, how men are born, and how they come into the world. The other tells him, that every man is bred in the womb of one of the same kind with our selves, thus and thus formed; and that while we are in the womb we have a very little body, and there move and are nourished, and we grow up by little and little till we come to such a bigness, and then we come forth into the world, and yet grow still till we come to such a proportion as we are of. Here presently this young man stops him and enquires, when we were thus little in the womb and did live, move and grow, did we not eat and drink, and breath at our mouth and nostrils as we do now? did we not ease Nature as we do now? If it be answered him, no; then he presently is ready to deny it, and offers to bring demonstrations

De Nat. Derr.
l. 2.

More Nevoch.
p. 2. c. 17.

monstrations that it was utterly impossible that it should be so. For, saith he, if either of us cease breathing, but for an hour, our motion and life is gone; how is it then possible for one of us though never so little, to live and move in the womb for so many months, when it is so close, and shut up, and in the middle of the body? If one of us, saith he, should swallow a little bird, it would presently dye as soon as it came into the stomach, how much more if it were in the belly? If we should be but for few dayes without eating and drinking, we could not live; how can a Child then continue so many months without it? Again, if one doth eat and not void the excrement of what he eats, he will be killed with it in few days; how can it possibly be otherwise with a Child? If it be replied that there is a passage open in the belly at which the Child receives his nourishment, he will presently say that it is as impossible as the other; for if our bellies were so open, we should be quickly destroyed. And again, if the child hath all its limbs perfect and sound, how comes it not to open its eyes, use the feet, mouth and hands, as we do? And so concludes it impossible that man should ever be born after this manner. Much after this way, saith that excellent Author, do Aristotle and others argue against the production of the world; for if the world were produced, say they, it must have been thus, and thus, and it is impossible that it should have been so: why? because we see things are otherwise now in the world. Which how infirm a way of arguing, it appears from the consideration of the former similitude, in which the Arguments are as strong to prove the impossibility of that which we know to be true, as in the case about which we dispute.

Sect. 6.

2.

And this now leads us to the second false Hypothesis which the opinion of the worlds eternity was founded on, which is, that there is no other way of production but by Generation. Most of the arguments which are used by Ocellus and Aristotle against the production of the world, run upon this supposition, that it must be generated as we see things are in the world. So Ocellus argues, πᾶν τε τὸ γένεσθαι ἀρχὴν εἰληφός, καὶ

De Natur. uni-
vers. p. 8.

διαλύσεως ὀφείλον κοιτανῆσαι, ὅσο ἐπιδέχεται μεταβολὰς· μίαν μὲν τὴν ἀπὸ μείονος ἐπὶ τὸ μείζον, καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ χειρόνος ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτερον· καλεῖται δὲ τὴν μὲν ἀφ' ἧς ἀρξεται μεταβάλλειν γένεσις· τὴν δὲ εἰς ἣν ἀρξεται ἀκμὴ· δευτέραν δὲ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ μείζονος ἐπὶ τὸ μείον καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ

βελτί-

Βελτίονος ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον· τὸ δὲ συμπέρασμα τῆς μεταβολῆς ταύτης ἐνο-
μοῖζεται τῇ ἐξου καὶ ἀλλοίωσι. Every thing that comes into being and
is subject to dissolution, hath two observable mutations in it; the
one is, whereby it grows from less to greater, and from worse to
better, and this is called Generation, and the height of this mu-
tation, perfection; the other begins from better to worse, and
from bigger to less, and the conclusion of this is corruption, and
dissolution. But now, saith he, if the world had a beginning,
there would be such a mutation in it, and it would have grown
by degrees greater till it had come to its perfection, and from
thence it would sensibly decay till it came to dissolution; but no
body hath ever observed such a mutation in the world, neither is
there any appearance of it; ἀλλὰ αἰεὶ καὶ αὐτὸ καὶ ὡς αὐτὸς δια-
τελεῖ καὶ ἴσεν καὶ ὁμοῖον αὐτὸ ἑαυτῷ. but the world is semper idem,
it varies not nor alters any thing from it self. For which,
he particularly instanceth in the courses, Symmetries, figures,
positions, intervals, proportions of motion which are in the
world, which things are all capable of such a mutation, yet
we see no such thing in the Universe, from whence he infers
that the universe was always and will be as it is. Upon the
same principle doth Aristotle dispute for the eternity of the
world from the Nature of his materia prima, because if the
first matter were generated it must be generated of other
matter, and so in infinitum; and so he argues from the Na-
ture of the Heavens that they are not capable of generation
and corruption as other bodies are. All which Arguments
signifie no more than this, that the World was not generated
as Plants or Animals are; and who ever right in his wits
asserted that it was? But do any of these Arguments prove
it impossible that God having infinite power should produce
the Universe after another way, than any of those things are
produced in, which we observe in the World? For we assert
an infinite and eternal Being which was the efficient cause of
the world, who by his omnipotent power produced it out of
nothing, and continues it in its Being; which is well ex-
pressed by the Author of the refutation of Aristotle in Justin *Aristot. dog-*
Martyrs works. We assert, saith he, one God who is eternal *mat. everf.*
himself, that hath nothing else coequal with himself, neither by *p. 111.*
way of subjection or opposition, whose power is so great that no-
thing

thing can hinder it, by which power he produced the world, ἀρχὴν ἔχοντες τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ οὐ πῶς διακρίνεται, πῶς ἐκείνη δὲ ληίσαι; which hath no other cause, either of its beginning, or of its being, or continuance, but only his Will. Who fully answers in a Philosophical manner, the particular Allegations out of Aristotle, concerning the eternity of the world: his design being, as he saith, to shew μὴ καὶ πῶς ἀποδεικνύειν ὁπσιμὴν, καὶ θὺν ἐπαγγέλλειν Ἑλλήνων περὶ Θεοῦ τε καὶ κτίσεων τὰς λόγους πειρῶν, τὸ τοῦ πεποιμένου, ἀλλ' εἰκαστὸν τὸ δοκῶν διεισαμύνης. That the Greek Philosophers in their discourses concerning God and the Creation, were very far from being as good as their word to observe the laws of demonstration, but instead of them proceeded only upon opinions and conjectures. And as to this particular of the possibility of another way of production, besides that of generation, he proves it from Aristotles own opinion, from the equal necessity of the existence of matter, as of God. For, saith he, If God can produce any thing out of matter, which is as necessarily existent as himself, he may produce something out of nothing. For the same repugnancy that there is in that which is absolutely nothing to be produced, the same must there be in that which is necessarily existent. How then can God produce something out of matter which necessarily exists, and not be able to produce something out of nothing? For if matter have its original from it self, how can it be subject to the power of another? And besides, if we acknowledge God to have his Being from himself, and on that account attribute infinite power to him, by the same reason we must attribute it to matter. But whatever hath infinite power in it self, hath a power upon something beyond it self; but if God and matter have it both, they can never have power upon each other, or without themselves. Which is a far greater absurdity than the meer asserting a power to produce something out of nothing, which is implied in the very notion of infinite power; for if it be confined to any matter, the power is not infinite, because we cannot but conceive the bounds of it; for it extends no further than matter doth. So that a power of creation is implied in the very Notion of a Deity; and therefore it is a meer Sophism to argue because the world could not be generated, therefore it

Justin Mar-
tyr. ep. p. 123.

it could not be *produced*, unless any other way of *production* but by *generation*, be proved *impossible*.

A third false *Hypothesis* they proceeded on was this, *that the Being of the world was no effect of Gods Will, but of the necessity of Nature.* For although the *Philosophers* we now speak of, did assert a *Deity*, which in some sense might be called the *cause* of the *world*, yet they withal asserted that the *world* was *Coequal* with God himself, and so though there might be some *priority* in *order of causes* between them, yet there was none in *order of time*, or *duration*, as we see the *light*, though it *flows* from the *Sun*, yet the *Sun* is never without *light*. This *Aristotle* proves from the necessity of *motion* and *time*: For, saith he, *whatever is moved, must be moved by something else, and consequently there must be a running in Infinitum*; but this runs on a false supposition of the necessity of a continual *Physical motion* in *things*, which we deny, since *God* by his *infinite power* may give *motion* to that which had it not before; and so all that can be proved, is the necessity of some first *cause*, which we assert, but no *necessity* at all of his continual *acting*, since he may cause *motion* when he please. And for *time* continually existing, it denotes nothing real in it self *existing*, but only our *manner of conception*, of the *duration* of things, as it is conceived to belong to *motion*; and so can argue nothing as to the *real existence* of *things* from all eternity. But the latter *Platonists* look upon these as insufficient ways of *probation*, and therefore argue from those *attributes* of *God*, which they conceive most *necessary* and *agreeable* to *Gods Nature*; and by which the *World* was *produced* if at all: so that by the same *arguments* whereby we prove that the *world* was made by *God*, they prove it to have been from all *eternity*. It was well and truly said of *Plato* in his *Timaus*, *that the Goodness of God was the cause of the production of the world*; from which speech the more modern *Platonists* gather a *necessity* of the *worlds eternity*; for from hence they infer, that since *God* was always *good*, he must always have an *object* to exercise his *goodness* upon; as the *Sun* *disperseth his light as soon as he is himself*. True, were *God* of the nature of the *Sun*, it would be so with him; or were the *Sun* of

Seet. 7.
3.

the Nature of *God*, it would not be so with it. But there is this vast difference between them, that though *God* be essentially and necessarily good, yet the communications of this goodness are the effect of his Will, and not merely of his nature; For were not the acts of beneficence and goodness in *God* the free acts of his will, man must be made as happy as he was capable of being, not only upon his first existence in the world, but as long as it should continue, by meer necessity of nature without any intervention of the will or actions of men. And so there could be no such difference as that of good and bad men in the world; for if the lettings forth of *Gods* goodness to the world be so necessary, all men must become necessarily good, if *Gods* goodness be so great as to be able to make men so; which I suppose will not be questioned. By this then we see that the communications of *Gods* goodness to the world are free, and depend upon the eternal counsels of his will, which is a depth too great for us to approach, or look into; by what necessity then, if *God* be a free Agent, and of Infinite wisdom, as well as goodness, must we either assert the eternity of the world, or fear to deprive *God* of his essential goodness? Whereas to make the communications of *Gods* goodness ad extra necessary, and therefore to make the world from eternity, that he might have an object to exercise his goodness on, is to take as much off from the Infinite Perfection and self-sufficiency of the divine nature as it would seem to flatter his goodness. For *God* cannot be himself without his goodness; and if his goodness cannot be without some creature to shew or display it upon, *God* cannot be perfect nor happy, without his creatures, because these are necessary issues of his goodness; and consequently we make the Being of the creatures necessary to his Being *God*. Which is the highest derogation from the absolute perfection of the Divine Nature. We assert then so much goodness in *God*, as none can be imagined greater, we assert, that it was the communication of this Divine goodness which gave being to the world; but withal we acknowledge *God* to be an Agent infinitely wise and free, who dispenseth this goodness of his in such a way and manner as is best pleasing to himself, though ever agreeable to his Nature. As *God* is in-

infinitely good in himself, so whatever he doth is *suitable* to this *Nature* of his ; but the particular *determinations* of the *acts* of *Gods* beneficence belong to the *Will* of *God*, as he is a most free and *Independent Agent* ; so that *goodness* as it imports the necessary *rectitude* of the *Divine Nature*, implies a *perfection* inseparable from the true *Idea* of *God* ; but as it is taken for the *expressions* of *Divine bounty* to somewhat without, as the object of it , it is not implied in our *conception* of *God*, as to his nature, but belongs to the free *determinations* of his *Will*. We cannot then, neither ought we to *determine* any thing concerning the particular *ways* of *Gods* bounty towards the whole *Universe*, or any part of it, any further than *God* himself hath declared it to us. Now we see the *world* exists, we have *cause* to adore that *goodness* of *God*, which not only gave a *Being* to the *Universe* , but continually *upholds* it, and plentifully provides for all the *Creatures* which he hath made in it. Which the *Hearthen* was so sensible of, that the *Stoick* in *Tully* taking notice of the abundant *provision* which is made in the *world*, not only for *mans* necessity, but for *delight* and *ornament*, cries out, *ut interdum Pronœa nostra Epicurea esse videatur* : *Gods Providence* doth abundantly exceed *mans* necessity. We see then from this discourse, how *unsafe* and *unsatisfactory* (that I may not say *bold* and *presumptuous*) those *arguments* are, which are drawn from a general *consideration* of the *Divine Nature* and *Goodness*, without regard had to the *determinations* of his *Will*, as to the *existence* of *things* in the *World*. It cannot certainly then be an *argument* of any great force with any candid *enquirers* after *Truth* and *Reason*, which hath been lately pleaded in the *behalf* of that *Pythagorean hypothesis* of the *pre-existence* of *souls*, viz. That if it be good for *mens* *souls* to be at all, the sooner they are, the better ; but we are most certain that the *Wisdom* and *goodness* of *God* will do that which is best ; and therefore if they can enjoy themselves before they come into these *terrestrial bodies* (it being better for them to enjoy themselves than not) they must be before they come into these *bodies*. Wherefore the *pre-existence* of *souls* is a necessary result of the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of *God*, who can no more fail to do that which is best, than he can to understand

De Nat. Deor.
l. 2.

derstand it. I now seriously enquire of such who love reason above Plato and Pythagoras, whether if the eternity of the world were put into the Argument instead of the pre-existence of souls, this Argument would not hold as strongly for that, as it doth for pre-existence; and if I am bound to believe pre-existence on this ground, I be not likewise bound to believe at least the souls of men eternal, if not the Universe. But how reconcileable the eternity of the World is to the Pythagorick Cabbala of the Creation, I am yet to understand. But if this Argument doth not at all infer the eternity of the world, as we have shewed it doth not, much less doth it pre-existence of souls.

- Sect. 8. We have thus far considered the first Hypothesis, which is repugnant to Moses concerning the Origine of the Universe, which is that which asserts the eternity of the world as it is; we come now to the second, which attributes the Formation of the world as it is, to God as the efficient cause, but attributes eternity to the matter out of which the World was framed. I am not ignorant that some who would be taken for the Masters of Reason, are so far from conceiving this Hypothesis to be repugnant to the Text of Moses, that they conceive it to be the genuine sense of it, viz. that there was a pre-existent matter, out of which God formed the World. But I would willingly understand how Moses would have expressed that matter it self was created, supposing it had been his intention to have spoken it; for although the word ברא may not of it self imply necessarily the production of things out of nothing, i. e. out of no pre-existent matter; yet it is acknowledged by all that no word used by the Jews is more proper to that than ברא is; and P. Fagius cites it from R. Nachmani, that the Hebrew Language hath no other word to signifie such a production out of nothing but ברא. It is therefore a very weak manner of arguing, that because ברא is sometimes used for no more than עשה, therefore the world was created out of pre-existent matter; all that can rationally be inferred, is, that from the meer force and importance of that word the contrary cannot be collected: but if other places of Scripture compared, and the evidence of reason, do make it clear that there could
- be

be no *præexistent matter* which was *uncreated*, then it will necessarily follow that *creation* must be taken in its proper sense. And in this sense it is evident, that not only *Jews* and *Christians*, but even the *Heathens* themselves understood *Moses*, as is plain by *Galen*, where he compares the *opinion* *Galen de usu
part. l. 11.* of *Moses*, with that of *Epicurus*, and ingenuously confesseth that of *Moses*, which attributed the *production* of *things* to *God*, to be far more *rational* and *probable* than that of *Epicurus*, which assigned the *Origine* of things to a meer casual *concourse* of *Atoms*: but withal adds that he must dissent from both; and sides with *Moses* as to the *Origine* of such things as depend on *Generation*, but asserts the *præ-existence* of *matter*, and withal that *Gods power* could not extend its self beyond the capacity of the *matter* which it wrought upon. *Atque id est*, saith he, *in quo ratio nostra ac Platonis, tum aliorum qui apud Græcos de rerum natura recte conscripserunt, à Mose dissidet.* How true these words are, will appear afterwards. *Chalcidius* in his *Commentaries* on *Plato's Timæus*, where he speaks of the *Origine* of *ἔαν*, which in him is still translated *Sylva*, and inquires into the different *opinions* of all *Philosophers* about it, takes it for granted, that according to *Moses*, this *ἔαν* had its *production* from *God*. *Hebrai sylvam generatam esse consentiunt; quorum sapientissimus Moyses non humana facundia, sed divina,* *Chalcid. in
Tim. p. 372.* *ut ferunt, inspiratione vegetatus, in eo libro, qui de genitura mundi censetur, ab exordio sic est profatus, juxta interpretationem LXX. prudentium; Initio Deus fecit cælum & terram. Terra autem erat invisibilis & incompta. Ut vero ait Aquila: Caput rerum condidit Deus cælum & terram; terra porro inanis erat & nihil; velut Symmachus; Ab exordio condidit Deus cælum & terram. Terra porro fuit otiosum quid, confusumque, & inordinatum. Sed Origenes asseverat ita sibi ab Hebraeis esse persuasum, quod in aliquantum sit à vera proprietate derivata interpretatio. Fuisse enim in exemplari, Terra autem stupida quadam erat admiratione. Omnia tamen hæc in unum aiunt concurrere, ut & generata sit ea quæ subjecta est universo corpori, sylva, sermonesque ipsos sic interpretantur.* Where we find by the *Testimony* of *Chalcidius* an universal consent as to the *production* of the

universal corporeal matter by God; for that is all which is understood by his term of *generata est*. But this same author afterwards tells us, that by *Heavens* and *Earth* in the first verse of *Genesis*, we are not to understand the *visible Heavens* and *Earth*: For, saith he, the *Heavens* which are called the firmament, were created after, and on the third day when the *Waters* were separated, the dry *Land* appeared which was called *Earth*. *Qui tumultuario contenti sunt intellectu, cœlum hoc quod videmus, & terram quâ subvehimur, dici putant; porro qui altius indagant, negant hoc cœlum ab initio factum, sed secundo die.* And therefore by the *Heavens* he understands *Incorpoream Naturam*, and by earth *ἄαν* or the *primigenial matter*, And this, saith he, appears by the following words, *The Earth was invisible and without form; i. e. this corporeal matter, before it was brought into order by the power and wisdom of God, remained a rude and indigested lump; and that which is so, might well be called invisible and without form.* And therefore it is called *inanis* and *nihil*, because of its capacity of receiving all forms, and having none of its own. *Symmachus* calls it *otiosa & indigesta*; the former because of its inability to produce any thing of it self: the latter because it wanted a divine power to bring it into due order. That *stupidity* and *admiration* which *Origen* attributes to it, he conceives to relate to the *Majesty* of *God*, who was the orderer and contriver of it, *siquidem opificis & auctoris sui majestate capta stupuerit*. Thus we see that according to *Moses*, the first matter of the world was produced by *God*, which is largely manifested by *Origen* against the *Marcionists*: a fragment of which is extant in his *Philocalia*; and by *Tertullian* against *Hermogenes*, and others, who from the opinion of the *præ-existence* of matter are called *Materiarii*.

Origen. Philoc.
cap. 24. *Tertul.*
ad Hermog. per tot.

Sect. 9.

Having thus cleared the sense of *Moses* it is far more difficult to find out the true opinions of the antient *Philosophers* concerning the production or eternity of corporeal matter, there having been so great dissensions, not onely about the thing it self, but about the opinions of some about it. For it is plain by *Plutarch's* *ὑποζωγία*, as well as the discourses of the later *Platonists*, how eager some have been

De Anima pro-
creat. Timæo.

been to interpret *Plato's Timæus* in favour of the eternity at least of *matter*, if not of the *World*. But although *Plato* doth assert therein a *præ-existence* of *rude matter*, before the formation of the world, yet I see no reason why he should be otherwise understood than in the same sense that we believe a *Chaos*, to have gone before the bringing the world into the order it is now in. And in that sense may those places in *Plutarch* be interpreted, ὅς ἐν τῷ μὴ ὄντι ἡ γένεσις, ὅς ἐν τῷ μὴ καλῶς καὶ ἰκανῶς ἔχοντι, and so likewise those following words, ὅς θεὸς ἔτε σῶμα τὸ ἀσώματον, ἔτε ψυχὴν τὸ ἀψυχον ἐπέειπεν; for the meaning may be no more than that *Plato* conceived that all the productions of the kinds of things, which are in the *World*, was out of a *Pra-existent Hyle*, the one *spiritual* and *intelligible*, out of which he supposed souls to be formed, the other *sensible* and *corporeal*, out of which other *Beings* which were more gross and *material*, were produced. So *Chalcidius* tells us that both *Pythagoras* and *Plato* looked upon *constitutionem sylvæ* to be *opus providentiæ*: which I suppose relates not only to the bringing of *matter* into form, but to the production of *matter* it self. But after this he takes a great deal of pains to search out the true meaning of *Plato* concerning the *Origin* of *Hyle*, and mentions the great dissensions among the *Platonists* about it, and the *obscurity* of the *Timæus* in it. To him therefore I refer the Reader: Who likewise brings in *Numenius* largely discoursing concerning the opinion of *Pythagoras* about it, who condemns all those, as not understanding *Pythagoras*, who attribute to him the production of the indeterminate *Hyle*. These are his words, *Numenius ex Pythagoræ Magisterio Stoicorum hoc de initiis dogma refellens, Pythagoræ dogmate, cui concinere dicit dogma Platonicum, ait Pythagoram, Deum quidem singularitatis nominasse (Col. nomine appellasse) sylvam vero duitatis. Quam duitatem indeterminatam quidem, minime genitam, limitatam vero, generatam esse dicere. Hoc est, antequam exornaretur quidem, formamque & ordinem nancisceretur, sine ortu & generatione; exornatam vero atque illustratam, a Digestore Deo esse generatam. Atque ita quia generationis sit fortuna posterior, inornatum illud minime generatum, æquævum Deo, à quo*

Chalcid. in Tim. p. 377.

P. 401.

Pag. 393.

est ordinatum, intelligi debeat. Sed nonnullos Pythagoreos, vim sententia non recte assecutos, putasse, dici etiam illam indeterminatam & immensam duitatem, ab una singularitate institutam, recedente à natura sua singularitate, & in duitatis habitum migrante. But however these Pythagoreans might be deceived, who thought the Unity it self became the Deity; yet it is evident by Numenius, that he looked on the undetermined and confused matter to have been co-eval with God himself, and not produced by him. And if Numenius be as much to be credited in this as when he calls Plato, Moses Atticus, then the Creation of Universal matter can be no part of Pythagoras his Philosophick Cabbala. But whatever were the opinions of Plato, and Pythagoras concerning the first Origine of matter, we are certain that the Stoicks generally asserted the improduction of matter, and make that to be as necessary a passive principle for the Being of the world, as God is the active and efficient cause. So Diogenes Laertius reports of the Stoical principles concerning the

V. Zenon.

V. Lipsium in
Physiol. Sto.
l. I. c. 4.

Epist. 65.

Prefat. ad
Nat. Quæst.
Eclog. Physic.

In Tim. p. 388.

Origine of the Universe: Δοκεί ὁ αὐτοῖς ἀρχὰς ἢ τῶν ὅλων δύο· τὸ ποιεῖν καὶ τὸ πάχυν· τὸ μὲν ἐν πάχυν ἢ τῶν ἀποσιον εἶσαν τὴν ὕλην· τὸ δὲ ποιεῖν, ἢ ἐν αὐτῇ λόγον ἢ θεόν. They make two principles of the Universe, one active and the other passive; the passive, an essence without quality, called Hyle or confused matter; the active, the reason which acts in the other, which is God. These two principles Seneca calls *causa* & *materia*; *esse vero debet, faith he, aliquid unde fiat*; *deinde à quo fiat, hoc causa est, illud materia*. Although Seneca seems to make a quere of it elsewhere; *quantum Deus possit? materiam ipse sibi formet, an data utatur?* But Zeno is express in Stobæus, Οὐσίαν εἶναι τὴν ἡμῶν ὅλων πάντων πρώτῃν ὕλην, πάντῃ δὲ παῖσιν ἀίσιον ἔτε πλείω μνημονεύειν ἔπε ἐλάττω. The first essence of all is matter, which is eternal, and not capable of accession or diminution. To the same purpose Chalcidius speaks, *Stoici ortum sylvæ rejiciunt, quin potius ipsam & Deum, duo totius rei sumunt initia; Deum ut opificem; Sylvam ut quæ operationi subjiciatur. Una quidem essentia præditos facientem, & quod sit ac patitur, id corpus esse; diversa vero virtute; quia faciat, Deum; quia fiat, Sylvam esse.*

Secl. 10.

Having now found out the certain assertors among the
Heathen

Heathen Philosophers of the eternity and improdution of matter as the passive principle of things, we come to examine the reason of this Hypothesis, and whether there were foundation enough for this matter to subsist upon from all eternity? It might be sufficient prejudice against this opinion, that it was built on the same infirm conclusions which that of the eternity of the whole world was, viz. that *Maxime* which *Lipsius* attributes to *Democritus*, but was embraced by all those *Philosophers* who denied production of matter, *μὴδὲν ἐκ τῆς μὴ ὄντος γινέσθαι, μὴδὲ εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν ἐλθεῖν*, that nothing could be produced out of nothing, nor could return into nothing; which as we have already said, was only taken up from the established order of the Universe, and the manner of production of material Beings. But this is not all we have to charge this Hypothesis with; for,

Physiol. Stoic.
l. 2. c. 2.

1. It is repugnant to the Natural notion of a Deity, which must imply in it an omnipotent power; For otherwise we degrade him to the imbecillity of finite creatures, if he cannot produce any thing which doth not imply a contradiction: but what contradiction is there in this, that God should give a Being to that which had none before? For that is all we understand by Creation, viz. the producing of something out of nothing, or which had nothing out of which it was produced. Now what repugnancy is there to any free principle of reason, that a power infinite should raise an Insect into Being without any passive principle out of which it was caused; and if an Infinite power can do that, it may as well produce the world out of nothing, else the power would not be Infinite; for it would have its bounds set, that thus far it could go and no further. Now if such a power in God implies no contradiction in itself, I say, the asserting the necessary existence of matter implies a contradiction to this power. For, 1. A power to produce something out of nothing would be to no purpose, if a passive principle or præ-existent matter be necessary to the production of any thing; and so that Being which hath a power to produce something out of nothing, hath only a power to produce something out of something, which is a plain contradiction. 2. If God hath a power to produce something out of nothing, either this power doth extend

tend to the production of this matter, or not ; if it doth, then it depends on him; if not, his power is not infinite, and so the same power is infinite and not infinite ; which is another contradiction. So that it is plainly repugnant to the notion of a God to assert the necessary and eternal existence of matter.

2. If matter be unproduced, then necessary existence must belong to it as well as to God; and if necessary existence belongs to matter, infinite power must belong to it too ; For what ever necessarily exists is self-originated ; what-ever is self-originated, could not by any cause whatsoever be hindered from Being ; what cannot by any cause be hindered from Being, hath infinite power; what hath infinite power, may produce any thing, and is God, and so matter cannot be a meer passive principle, but must be an active, and so must be God himself, or else there must be more Gods than one. To an argument something of this nature *Hermogenes* in *Tertullian* replies, that matter would not lose the Name or Nature of matter, because of its Co-eternity with God, neither could it be God meerly on that account, unless it had other things that were agreeable to the Nature of God as well as that. But I have already shewed that necessary existence implies other perfections going along with it : which is likewise thus proved by *Tertullian* in answer to *Hermogenes* ; the reason of the imperfections which are to be seen in any creatures, is from hence, that they derive their Beings from a higher cause, who creates them in what order he pleases ; but that which hath its original from it self, must on that account want those imperfections which other creatures in the World have ; and therefore if necessary existence be of the Nature of matter, all other perfections must belong to it too : and so there can be no superiority and inferiority between God and matter, because on both sides there will be necessary existence. *Divinitas gradum non habet, utpote unica* : and so the eternal existence of matter, is repugnant to the unity of God.

3. It is repugnant to the Independency of God: for it makes God subject to matter, and not matter to God. For if God cannot produce any thing without *præ-existent matter*, the
matter

Advers. Her-
mog. c. 4.

Cap. 7.

matter is necessary to his action, and so God must depend on that which he can do nothing without; and so Gods using matter, is as Tertullian speaks, *ex necessitate mediocritatis sue*, to help him in the production of things. *Nemo non subjicitur ei cujus eget ut possit uti*, as he goes on. Thus matter at last is crept above the Deity, that God can do nothing without its aid and concurrence; and so as Tertullian sharply saies, *God is beholding to matter for every Being known to the world; grande beneficium Deo contulit ut haberet hodie per quam Deus cognosceretur, & omnipotens vocaretur, nisi quod jam non omnipotens, si non & hoc potens ex nihilo omnia proferre.* Thus we see how irreconcilable this Hypothesis is with these Attributes of God.

Cap. 8.

4. *It is repugnat to the immensity of God.* For either God did exist separate from this eternal matter, or was conjoyned with it; if conjoyned with it, then both made but one Being, as Maximus, or Origen argues; if separate from it, then there must be something between them, and so there will be three real improduced things. If it be answered that they are neither conjoyned nor separate, but God is in matter as in his proper place, as the Stoicks asserted, it is easily replied, that either then he is in a part of matter, or the whole matter; if in a part only, he cannot be immense; if in the whole as his adequate place, how could he then ever frame the World? For either he must then recede from that part in which he was, and contract himself into a narrower compass that he might fashion that part of the World which he was about, or else he might likewise frame part of himself with that part of the World which he was then framing of, which consequence is unavoidable on the Stoical Hypothesis of Gods being corporeal and confined to the World as his proper place. And so much for this second Hypothesis concerning the Origine of the Universe, which supposeth the eternity of matter as co-existing with God.

Orig. Philoc. c. 24.

I come now to that which makes most noise in the World, which is the Atomical or Epicurean Hypothesis, but will appear to be as irrational as either of the foregoing, as far as it concerns the giving an account of the Origine of the Universe. For otherwise supposing a Deity which produced

Seet II.

duced in the world and put it into the order it is now in, and supremely governs all things in the world, that many of the *Phænomena* of the *Universe*, are far more intelligibly explained by *matter* and *motion* than by *substantial forms*, and *real qualities*, few free and unprejudiced minds do now scruple. But because these little *particles* of *matter* may give a tolerable account of many *appearances* of *nature*, that therefore there should be nothing else but *matter* and *motion* in the *World*, and that the *Origine* of the *Universe* should be from no *wiser* principle than the casual concourse of these *Atoms*, is one of the evidences of the proneness of mens minds to be *intoxicated* with those opinions they are once in love with. When they are not content to allow an *Hypothesis* its due place and subserviency to *God*, and *providence*, but think these *Atoms* have no force at all in them unless they can *extrude* a *Deity* quite out of the *World*. For it is most evident that it was not so much the *truth* as the *serviceableness* of this *Hypothesis*, which hath given it entertainment among men of *Atheistical* spirits. *Epicurus* himself in his *Epistle* to *Pythocles* urgeth that as a considerable circumstance in his opinion that he brought no *God* down upon the stage to put things in order, $\kappa\iota\ \eta\ \theta\epsilon\alpha\ \phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma\ \pi\epsilon\acute{\rho}\epsilon\varsigma\ \tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha\ \mu\eta\delta\epsilon\ \mu\eta\ \pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\upsilon\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta\iota$, which his Paraphrast *Lucretius* hath thus rendered.

Apud Diog.
Laert. l. 10.
Lucret. de
Nat. l. 5.

*Nequaquam nobis divinitus esse paratam
Naturam rerum.*

If this opinion then be *true*, the *history* of the *creation* quite falls to the ground, on which account we are obliged more particularly to consider the *reason* of it. The *Hypothesis* then of *Epicurus* is, that before the world was brought into that form and order it is now in, there was an infinite empty space in which were an innumerable company of solid particles or *Atoms* of different sizes and shapes, which by their weight were in continual motion, and that by the various occurrences of these, all the bodies of the *Universe* were framed into that order they now are in. Which is fully expressed by *Dionysius* in *Ensebins*, and very agreeably to the sense of *Epicurus* in his

Epistles

Epistles to *Herodotus* and *Pithocles*, and to what *Plutarch* *Præp. Evang.* reports of the sense of *Epicurus*, though he names him not *l. 14. c. 22.* (if at least that book be his which *Muretus* denies) the *p. 421. ed. R.* words of *Dionysius* are these concerning the *Epicureans*, *De Placitis* *St.* *Phil. l. 1. c. 4.* *ἐν μὲν γὰρ ἀτομίᾳ ἀποσειπτόντες ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν πᾶσα καὶ σμικρότατα σώματα,* *Annot. in* *Senec. de pro-* *vid.* *πλήθος ἀνδρείθρια, καὶ π' ἡρώων κενόν, μέγας ἀπειρόβριον ἀπείρατος,* *αὐ-* *τοῖσι, ταύτης δὲ φασὶ τὰς ἀτόμους ὡς ἔτυχεν ἐν τῷ κενῷ φερούσας, αὐ-* *τομάτως τε συμπέσοντας ἐμήλαιοι διὰ ῥύμην ἀτακτοῖν καὶ συμπλεκο-* *μένης διὰ τὸ πολύχρμον ἐμήλων ἐπ' ἀμειβάνεσθαι, καὶ ἔτι πάντε κόσμον,* *καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, μᾶλλον ὃ κόσμος ἀπείρους ἀποτρίβειν.* So that according to this opinion, all the account we have of the *Origine* of the world, is from this general *Rendez-vous* of *Atoms* in this infinite space, in which after many encounters and facings about, they fell into their several troops, and made up that ordered *Battalia* which now the world is the Scheme of. It was not imprudently done of *Epicurus* to make the worlds infinite, as well as his space and *Atoms*; for by the same reason that his *Atoms* would make one world, they might make a thousand; and who would spare for worlds, when he might make them so easily? *Lucretius* gives us in so exact an account of the several courses the *Atoms* took up in disposing themselves into bodies, as though he had been *Master-Master-General* at the great *Rendez-vous*; for thus he speaks of his *Atoms*.

*Quæ quia multimodis, multis mutata per omne
Ex Infinito vexantur percita plagis,
Omne genus motus & cætus experiundo,
Tandem deveniunt in taleis disposituras,
Qualibus hæc rebus consistit summa creata.*

*De Nat. rer.
l. 1.*

And more particularly afterwards;

*Sed quia multa modis multis primordia rerum
Ex Infinito jam tempore percita plagis,
Ponderibusque suis consueverunt concita ferri,
Omnimodisque coire, atque omnia pertentare,
Quæcunque inter se possunt congressa creare;
Ut non sit mirum, si in taleis disposituras
Deciderint quoque, & in taleis venere meatus,
Qualibus hæc rerum genitum nunc summa novando.*

Lib. 5.

Thus we see the substance of the *Epicurean Hypothesis*, that there

there was an *Infinite* number of *Atoms*, which by their frequent *occurrences* did at last meet with those of the same nature with them, and these being conjoyned together made up those *bodies* which we see; so that all the account we are able to give according to this *Hypothesis* of all the *Phænomena* of the *Universe*, is from the fortuitous *concourse* of the *Atoms* in the first forming of the world, and the different contexture of them in bodies. And this was delivered by the ancient *Epicureans* not with any doubt or *hesitation*, but with the greatest *confidence* imaginable. So *Tully* observes of *Velleius* the *Epicurean*, beginning his discourse, *fidenter sane ut solent isti, nihil tam verens quam ne dubitare de aliqua re videretur; tanquam modo ex deorum concilio, & ex Epicuri intermundiis descendisset*: *Confidence* was the peculiar genius of that sect, which we shall see in them to be accompanied with very little reason.

De Nat. Deor.
l. 1.

Sect. 12.

For those two things which make any principles in *Philosophy* to be rejected, this *Atomical Hypothesis* is unavoidably charged with; and those are, *If the principles be taken up without sufficient ground in reason for them; and if they cannot give any sufficient account of the Phænomena of the world.* I shall therefore make it appear, that this *Hypothesis*, as to the *Origine* of the *Universe*, is first, merely precarious, and built on no sufficient grounds of reason. Secondly, That it cannot give any satisfactory account of the *Origine* of things.

1. That it is a precarious *Hypothesis*, and hath no evidence of reason on which it should be taken up; and that will be proved by two things. 1. *It is such an Hypothesis as the Epicureans themselves could have no certainty of according to their own principles.* 2. *That the main principles of the Hypothesis it self are repugnant to those Catholick Laws of nature which are observed in the Universe.*

1. *The Epicureans according to their own principles could have no certainty of the truth of this Hypothesis.* And that
1. *Because they could have no certain evidence of its truth.*
2. *Because their way of proving it was insufficient.*

1. *That they could have no certain evidence of the truth of it, I prove from those criteria, which Epicurus lays down as the only certain rules of judging the truth of things by;*
and

and those were *sense*, *Anticipation* and *Passion*. Let *sense* be never so *infallible* a rule of judgement, yet it is impossible there should be any *evidence* to *sense* of the truth of this *Hypothesis*; and let him extend his *ὑποπόθεσιν* as long as he please, which was his great help for correcting the errors of *sense*, viz. as it was in the *Roman Court* when the case was not clear, *ampliandum est*; So *Epicurus* would have the object represented every way it could be before he past his judgement; yet this prudent caution would do him no good for this *Hypothesis*, unless he were so wise as to stay till this world were crumbled into *Atoms* again, that by that he might judge of the *Origine* of it. There is but one way left to find out the truth of things *inevident* to *sense*, (as by *Epicurus* his own confession all these *Atoms* are, which are now the component particles of bodies; much more those which by their fortuitous *concourse* gave *Being* to the world) and that is, if something evident to *sense* doth apparently prove it, which is his way of proving a *Vacuity* in nature from motion; but though that be easily answered by principles different from those of *Epicurus*, and more rational; yet that very way of probation fails him in this present *Hypothesis*. For what is there evident to *sense* which proves a fortuitous *concourse* of *Atoms* for the production of things? nay if we grant him that the composition of bodies is nothing else but the contexture of these insensible particles, yet this is far from being an evidence to *sense*, that these particles without any wise and directing providence should make up such bodies as we see in the world. And here when we speak of the evidence of *sense*, we may well ask as the *Stoick* in *Tully* doth, whether ever *Epicurus* found a Poem made by the casual throwing of letters together; and if a *concourse* of *Atoms* did produce the world, *cur porticum, cur templum, De Nat. Deor. cur domum, cur urbem non potest? why did it never produce* l. 2. *a cloyster, a temple, a house, a city*, which are far easier things than the world? I know *Epicurus* will soon reply, that things are otherwise in the world now than when it was first produced; I grant it, and from thence prove, that because no such thing ever happens in the world now, as a meerly casual *concourse* of *Atoms* to produce any thing, *Epi-*

V. Gassendum
de LogicaEpi-
curi. Op.To. 1.
c. 7. Can. 7.

curus could have no evidence from *sense* at all to find out the truth of his *Hypothesis* by. And as little relief can he find from his second *Criterion*, viz. *Anticipation*; for by his own acknowledgement, all *Anticipation* depends on the *senses*, and men have it only one of these four ways. 1. By *incurfion*, as the *species* of a man is preserved by the sight of him. 2. *By proportion*, as we can enlarge or contract that species of a man either into a Gyant or Pygmie. 3. *By similitude*, as we may fancie the image of a City by resemblance to one which we have seen. 4. *By Composition*, whereby we may joyn different images together, as of a horse and man to make a *Centaure*. Now though it be very questionable how some of these ways belong to a *Criterion* of *truth*, yet none of them reach our *case*; for there can be no *incurfion* of *insensible particles* as such upon our senses; we may indeed by *proportion* imagine the *parvitude* of them: but what is this to the proving the *truth* of the *Hypothesis*? *Similitude* can do no good, unless *Epicurus* had ever seen a world made so; the only relief must be from *composition*, and that will prove the *Origine* of the world by *Atoms* to be as true as that there are *Centaures* in the world, which we verily believe. These are the only *Criteria* which *Epicurus* would judge of the truth of natural things by (for the third, *Passion* relates wholly to things *Moral* and not *Physical*) and now let any one judge, whether the *Hypothesis* of the *Origine* of the *Universe* by *Atoms* can ever be proved true, either by the judgment of *sense*, or by *Anticipation*.

Sett. 13.
2.

The way they had to prove this *Hypothesis* was insufficient; and that was by proving that the *bodys* of the world are compounded of such *insensible particles*; Now, granting the thing, I deny the consequence; for what though the composition of *bodys* be from the contexture of *Atoms*, doth it therefore follow, that these *particles* did casually produce these *bodys*? nay doth it at all follow, that because *bodys* upon their resolution do fall into *insensible particles* of different size, figure and motion, therefore these *particles* must be *præ-existent* to all *bodys* in the world? For it is plain, that there is now an *Universal lump* of matter out of which these *insensible particles* arise, and whither they return. on
the

the dissolution of *bodys*; and all these various *corpuscles* may be of the same *uniform substance* only with the alteration of *size, shape, and motion*; but what then? doth this prove, that because particular *bodies* do now emerge out of the various configuration and motion of *insensible particles* of that matter which exists in the world, that therefore this whole matter was produced by the *casual occurrences* of these *Atoms*? It will ask more time and pains than is usually taken by the *Philosophers* either ancient or modern, to prove that those things whatsoever they are, whether *elements* or *particles* out of which *bodies* are supposed to be compounded, do exist separately from such compounded bodies, and antecedently to them. We find no *Aristotelian elements* pure in the world, nor any *particles* of matter destitute of such a *size, figure and motion* as doth make some body or other. From whence then can we infer either the existence of *Aristotles materia prima*, without *quiddity, quantity, or quality*, or the *Epicurean Atoms* without such a *contexture* as makes up some bodies in the world? Our profound *Naturalist* Dr. Harvey, after his most accurate search into the *natures and Generation of things*, delivers this as his experience and judgement concerning the commonly reputed *elements* or *principles* of bodies. For speaking of the different opinions of *Empedocles* and *Hippocrates*, and *Democritus*, and *Epicurus*, concerning the composition of bodies, he adds, *Ego vero neque in animalium productione, nec omnino in ulla corporum similiarium generatione (sive ea partium animalium, sive plantarum, lapidum, mineralium, &c. fuerit) vel congregationem ejusmodi, vel missibilia diversa in generationis opere unienda pra-existere, observare unquam potui.* And after explaining the way which he conceived most rational and consonant to experience in the *Generation of things*, he concludes his discourse with these words; *Idemque in omni generatione fieri crediderim; adeo ut corpora similiaria mista, elementa sua tempore priora non habeant, sed illa potius elementis suis prius existant (nempe Empedoclis atque Aristotelis igne, aqua, aere, terra, vel Chymicorum sale, sulphure, & Mercurio, aut Democriti Atomis) utpote natura quoque ipsis perfectiora. Sunt, inquam, mista & composita, etiam tempore*

De Generat.
Anim. Exercit.
72.

priora elementis quibuscumlibet sic dictis, in quæ illa corrumpuntur & desinunt; dissolvuntur scilicet in ista ratione potius quam reipsa & actu. Elementa itaque quæ dicuntur, non sunt priora istis rebus quæ generantur aut oriuntur; sed posteriora potius, & reliquia magis quam principia. Neque Aristoteles ipsemet aut alius quispiam unquam demonstravit, elementa in rerum natura separatim existere, aut principia esse corporum simularium. If then none of these things which *bodies* are resolved into, and are supposed to be compounded of, either have been or can be proved to exist *separate* from and antecedent to those *bodies* which they compound, what then becomes of all our company of *Atoms* which are supposed by their *concourse* in an *Infinite space* to be the *Origine* of the world? I know not where to find them, unless dancing with the *Schoolmens Chimeras* in a *Vacuum*, or in a space as empty as the *Infinite one*, viz. some *Epicureans brains*. Neither therein will they be much unlike their great master *Epicurus*, if we believe the character which the *Stoick* in *Tully* gives of him, who saith he was *homo sine arte, sine literis, insultans in omnes, sine acumine ullo, sine auctoritate, sine lepore*. But allowing the *Stoick* some of that passion, (which he disclaimed so much) in these words; yet we may rather believe what *Tully* himself elsewhere speaks of *Epicurus* his sentiments, that they were none of them *handsom* or *becoming* a man. *At ille quid sentit?* saith he of *Epicurus*; and soon replies, *sentit autem nihil unquam elegans, nihil decorum*; and in another place speaking of his *Morals*, he saith, *nihil generosum sapit atque magnificum, there was nothing noble and generous in him*. Which censure of *Epicurus*, all the pains that *P. Gassendus* hath taken in the vindication of the life and opinions of *Epicurus*, hath not been able to wipe off. For although we should yield what that *learned man* so much contends for, that all the *calumnies* which were cast on *Epicurus* arise from the *Antipathy* between *Zeno* and the following *Stoicks*, and the *School of Epicurus*; yet all this will not make *Epicurus* to have been comparable with some other *Philosophers* for parts and judgement, whose principles have somewhat more *generous* and *venerable* in them, than the *Morals* of *Epicurus* had, taking them in their more refined sense.

But

De Nat. Deor.
l. 2.

De Divinat.
l. 1.
De Finibus
l. 1.

But it is not the *Morality* of *Epicurus* which we now enquire after; our business is to see how well he acquits himself in rendring an account of the *Origine* of the *Universe* without a *Deity*. And so we come to consider the *Hypothesis* it self, whether it be *rational* or no, or consistent with the *Catholick Laws* of *nature* which appear in the world. Two things I shall here enquire into, which are the main principles of *Epicurus*, viz. the *motion* of these *Atoms* in the *Infinite space*, and the *manner* of the *concretion* of *bodies* by the *concourse* of these *Atoms*. Sect. 14.

1. I begin with their *motion*; which *Epicurus* attributes to his *Atoms* without any *hesitation*, and yet never undertakes to give an account of the *Origine* of that *motion*; which argues his whole *Hypothesis* to be extremely *precarious*. The thing then, (which he must assume as his main principle, without which all his other do nothing) is, that *motion* doth inseparably belong to the least *Atom* or *insensible particle*; for without this there cannot be imagined any *concourse* of *Atoms* at all, much less any such *texture* of *bodies* out of them. But for one to say that *Atoms* move, because it is their nature to move, and give no other account of it, is so *precarious*, that it will never give the least *satisfaction* to an inquisitive mind. And it will be the least of all pardonable in the *exploders* of *substantial forms* and *occult qualities*, when the *Origine* of the whole world is resolved into an *occult quality* which gives *motion* to *Atoms*. And herein the *Atomists* outdo the most credulous *Peripateticks*, seeing they lay the prime *foundation* of the world and of their own *Philosophy* together in a thing they can give no rational account of at all, which is, the *motion* of *Atoms* in an *Infinite Vacuity*. If it be replied, which is all *Epicurus* hath to say, that the *motion* of *Atoms* depends upon their *gravity*; the question returns upon him with the same *violence*, how comes this *gravity* to belong to these *Atoms* in such an *empty space*, where there can be no *impulsion* from other *bodies*, no *attraction* from any *magnetick particles* which are supposed to be the *causes* of the descent of *heavy bodies*? nay, *Epicurus* himself takes away any *center* of that *motion* of *Atoms*; and yet attributes a necessary *descent* to his *Atoms* by virtue of their

their gravity; and if a *Philosopher* may be such things as these are, so repugnant to the *Phænomena* of nature, without assigning any other reason for them, but that it is their nature, let us never venture *Philosophising* more, but sit down in that contented piece of *Ignorance* which attributes the causes of every thing unto *specifick forms* and *occult qualities*. For this is so *shameful* a piece of *beggery*, that *P. Gassendus* doth more than once disclaim it, and in his discourse of *motion* doth prove an *impossibility* of *motion* in an *Infinite empty space*. Might not *Epicurus* then have saved his *credit* better by sitting down with the *opinions* of his *fore-fathers*, than thus to go a *begging* for such *Hypotheses*, which none, who are not resolved to be *ignorant*, will be ready to grant him?

Scct. 15. But yet this is not all, but according to this fundamental principle of *Epicurus*, viz. that there's a principle of *motion* in every insensible *particle* of *matter*, he plainly overthrows another principle of his, which is the *solidity* and different *magnitude* of these *Atoms*. These *particles* are supposed to *solid*, that *Dionysius* in *Eusebius* tells us the account given why they are called *ἄτμοι*, was διὰ τὴν ἀλειπὴν σαφέστατα, because of their *indissoluble firmness*; and the different *sizes* of these *Atoms* is so necessary a principle, that from thence they undertake to resolve many *Phænomena* of the *Universe*: let us now see how consistent these things are with the inseparable property of *motion* belonging to *Atoms*: For if there be *particles* of such different *sizes*, then it is plain that there are some *particles* which may not only be conceived to be *bigger* than *others*, but are *really* so; and so there must be more parts of *matter* imagined in this bigger *particle* than in another less; and if there be more parts, these parts may be conceived separate from each other, that this *particle* may be equal to the other; now then, I demand, if *motion* doth inseparably belong to the least *particle* of *matter*, how comes one to be *bigger* than the other? for herein we see that every *particle* is not in distinct *motion*; for there cannot but be more imaginable *particles* in an *Atom* of a bigger size than in a less; and if so, there must be some *union* of those imaginable *particles* in that bigger *Atom*; and how could
such

Physic. s. 1. l. 3. c. 7.
De apparent. magnitud. Solis humilis & sublimis. ep. 4. s. 3.
De motu Physic. s. 1. l. 5. c. 2. V. ep. de motu impresso à motore transito. To. 3. ep.

Præp. Evang. l. 14. c. 22.

such an union be without *rest*, and what *rest* could there be if *motion* doth inseparably belong to every *particle* of *matter*? And so it must be in all those *Atoms* which are supposed to have *angles* and *hooks*, in order to their better *catching* hold of each other for the *composition* of *bodies*; how come these *hooks* and *angles* to be annexed to this *Atom*? for an *Atom* may be without them; whence comes this *union*, if such a *principle* of *motion* be in each *particle*? If it be answered, that *motion* did belong to all these *particles*, but by degrees the lesser *particles* hitting together made up these *angled* and *hooked* *particles*; I soon reply, that the *difficulty* returns more *strongly*; for if these *angled* and *hooked* *particles* be supposed *necessary* to the *texture* and *union* of *bodies*; how came those least imaginable *particles* ever to unite without such *hooks* and *angles*? And so the *question* will return in *infinitum*. If then the *solidity* and *indivisibility* of these *angled* *Atoms*, doth depend on the *union* and *rest* of those lesser imaginable *particles* joyned together, then it is evident that *motion* is no *inseparable* property of all these *particles*, but some are capable of *union*, in order to the making of such *hooks* and *angles*, which are necessary for the *texture* of *bodies*; and where there is *union* and *solidity*, there is *rest*, which is at least accompanied with it, if it be not one of the great *causes* of it. And without which the *Atomists* of all other *Philosophers* will be least able to give an account of *firmness* in *bodies* when they make *bodies* to consist of an *aggregation* of *particles*, by which it will be very hard finding a sufficient account of the difference between *fluid* and *firm* *bodies*, unless it be from the quicker *motion* and *agitation* of the *particles* of *fluid* *bodies*, and the *rest* of the *small* and *contiguous* parts that make up the *firm* *body*, *Princip.* 2. according to that *Catholick* Law of *nature*, whereby *things* art. 54, 55, continue in the state they are in till some stronger force puts them out of it. The only thing which the *Epicurean* *Atomists* have left to give any account of the *solidity* of *particles* of such different *sizes*, is, the want of *vacuity*; for say they, the ground of *divisibility* of *bodies* is the *interspersion* of a disseminated *Vacuum*; now where there is no *vacuity*, though the *particles* be of different *size*, yet they may be *solid* and *indivisible*.

History of
Fluid. and
Firmness
p. 202.

ble. But this is taken off by the instance produced against other persons by that *ingenious* and *Honourable* person Mr. Boyle in his *Physiological Essayes*, which is to this purpose, Suppose two of these presumed indivisible particles, both smooth and of a Cubical figure should happen to lye upon one another, and a third should chance to be fitly placed upon the upper of the two; what should hinder but that this Aggregate may by the violent knock of some other corpuscles be broken in the midst of the whole concretion, and consequently in the middlemost body? For suppose them as solid as may be, yet since corpuscles as hard as they, can be made very violently to knock against them, why may not those grate or break the middlemost corpuscle, or any of the others? And if there be a possibility of breaking off these Cubical particles in the middle, then meer want of Vacuity is no sufficient account of their being indivisible. By this we see how far the Atomists are from giving any rational account of the *Origine* of the motion of the *Atoms* themselves without a *Deity*.

Sett 16.

2. Supposing this motion to be granted them, yet they cannot give any satisfactory account of the manner of concretion of bodies by the casual occurrences of these *Atoms* moving in an infinite empty space. Which appears from those gross and extravagant suppositions of *Epicurus*, in order to the making these *Atoms* of his so hit together that they make up any bodies by their contexture.

1. He supposeth as it were two regions, a *superiour* and *inferiour* in an infinite empty space, which hath no center at all in it, nor any body, from which to measure those respects of above and below, as appears by his *Epistle* to *Herodotus*, wherein he saith, these terms of *ἄνω* and *κάτω*, or upwards and downwards, must be conceived without any bounds or limits at all. So that though we conceive something *superiour*, we must imagine nothing *supreme*, and so on the contrary. Whereby it is evident as *Gassendus* confesseth, that *Epicurus* thought the surface of the Earth to be a plain, and this plain to be continued up in a level superficies to the heavens, and so to all that immense space of the Universe. So that all those heavy bodies which should fall downwards in any parts of the widest distance on the earth, as in *Europe*, *Asia*, and *Africa*,
would

Physic. f. 1.
l. 3. c. 7.

would never meet (if they continued their *motion*) in the center of the earth, but would continue their *motion* still in a parallel line; and so he imagined that which is said to be above as to us, was really the upper part of the world, and so the descent of his *Atoms*, must necessarily be downwards towards the earth, according to the weight of them. And was not this a worthy *Mathematical* supposition, for one who would undertake to give an account of the *Origine* of the Universe without a *Deity*?

This motion of descent by reason of the gravity of *Atoms* would not serve his turn; for if the *Atoms* moved downwards thus in a parallel line, how was it possible for them ever to meet for the contexture of bodies? Now for this purpose he invented a motion of declination; for finding the motion *ad lineam*, or *ad perpendiculum* as some call it, could not possibly produce those varieties of bodies which are in the Universe, he supposed therefore the descent not to be in a perpendicular right line, but to decline a little, that so several particles in their descent might make some occurrences one upon another. And this *Epicurus* added to *Democritus*; *De Fin. l. 1.* but therein as *Tully* observes, was very unhappy, that where he adds to *Democritus*, *ea quæ corrigere vult, mihi quidem depravare videatur*; that he marr'd what *Democritus* had said, by mending of it. The reason of which motion of declination, is thus given by *Lucretius*,

*Quod nisi declinare solerent, omnia deorsum
Imbris uti gutta caderent per Inane profundum;
Nec foret offensus natus, neque plaga creata
Principiis, ita nil unquam natura creasset.*

*De rerum nat.
l. 2.*

It was obvious to object, that according to the principles of *Epicurus*, there could have been no concurrence at all of *Atoms* in an infinite space, on the two grounds he went on, which were the natural descent of *Atoms*, and the equi-velocity of the motion of all *Atoms* of what size soever, which he likewise asserted (although one would think if gravity were the cause of motion, then the more gravity, the swifter the motion would be) from hence, I say, it were not easie to conceive

how the *Atoms* should embrace each other in a *parallel line*, if they fell down as *Lucretius* expresseth it, like drops of rain; and therefore they saw a necessity to make their *motion decline* a little, that so they might justle and hit one upon another. But this *oblique motion* of the *Atoms*, though it be the only refuge left to salve the *Origine* of things by a course of *Atoms*, is yet as *precarious* and without reason as any other supposition of theirs whatsoever. *Tully* chargeth this motion of declination with two great faults, *futility*, and *inefficacy*, quæ cum res tota ficta sit pueriliter, tum ne efficit quidem quod vult. It is a childish fancy and to no purpose: For first, it is asserted without any reason at all given for it, which is unworthy a *Philosopher*; neither is it to any purpose; for if all *Atoms*, saith he, decline in their motion, then none of them will stick together; if some decline, and others do not, this is as precarious as any thing can be imagined, to assign a diversity of motion in indivisible particles, which yet have all the same velocity of motion; and as *Tully* saith, Hoc erit quasi provincias atomis dare, quæ recte, quæ oblique ferantur; as though *Epicurus* were the General at this Rendevous of *Atoms*, who stands ready to appoint every one his task and motion. This *Plutarch* tells us was the great charge against *Epicurus* οὐδ' ἀναίτιον ἐπιτολίσαντον κίνησιν ἐκ τῆς μὴ οὐκ, because he introduced such a motion of declination out of nothing upon no pretence of reason. And *Turnebus* tells us that the ground why they desired so small a declination, was because they were conscious to themselves, that it was founded upon no ground of reason; Et Epicurei sibi conscii culpæ, timide eam ponebant, & minimam sibi postulabant. To which purpose *Turnebus* cites those verses of *Lucretius*,

De Fin. bon. & mal. lib. 1.

De Anima procreat. & Timæo. Turnebus in Ciceron. de Fato.

Lib. 2.

Quare etiam atque etiam paulum inclinare necesse est
Corpora, nec plusquam minimum, ne fingere motus.
Obliquos videamur, & id res vera refutet.
Namque hoc in promptu manifestumque esse videmus,
Pondera quantum in se est, non posse obliqua meare,
E supero cum precipitant, quod cernere possis.
Sed nihil omnino recta regione viai
Declinare quis est qui possit cernere sese?

But

But this argument of *Lucretius* will hold if at all, further than this little *declination* (for it is no more they desire than as little as may be imagined, *quo nihil possit fieri minus*, as *Tully* expresseth it) but if they may *decline* a little, why not a great deal more? nay it is impossible to conceive, but a little *oblique motion* at first will in an *infinite space* grow to be very *oblique*; for there is nothing to hinder the *motion* which way it bends: now if there be never so little *motion* of *declination*, the *Atom* will be inclined that way; and what then should hinder, but that the *obliquity* in a *motion* through a great *space* should at last come to be very great; there being no *center* at all to guide the *motion* towards, and the *gravity* not hindering this little *declination*? Therefore *Tully* asks that question, *Cur declinet uno minimo, non declinet duobus aut tribus?* why only it declines *one minime* and not two or three; for, saith he, it is no *impulsion* from any other *Atom* which makes it decline that *one minime*; neither is there any *impediment* in the *space* to hinder it from declining more; so that, as he well saith, *optare hoc quidem est, non disputare*, this is to beg *Hypotheses* and not to prove them, which is the thing we have proved *Epicurus* to do. Which was the first thing premised, *viz.* that this *Hypothesis* of *Epicurus* was very *precarious*, and is built on no foundation of reason.

2. It is *unsatisfactory* and *insufficient*, as well as *precarious*; *Seet. 17.* for should we grant his two main principles, *Atoms* and his *infinite empty space*; yet we deny that ever his *Atoms* with all their *occursions* would ever produce those things which are in the *Universe*. To run through the noted *Phænomena* of the *Universe*, and to shew how *insufficient* an account the *Epicureans* are able to give of them, from a *fortuitous concurrence* of *Atoms*, is a task too large to be here undertaken. There are only three things which I shall rather suggest, than insist upon, to see what miserable shifts the *Epicureans* are driven to for the *salving* of them, and shall then leave it with the reader to judge, what *unmeasurable confidence* it is in any to reject the *Creation* of the *World* for the sake of the *Epicurean Hypothesis*; and whether it be not the height of *credulity*, as well as *infidelity*, to believe the *world* ever to have been made by a *fortuitous concurrence* of *Atoms*?

1. The great variety of appearances in nature, which are attributed to particles of the same nature, only with the alteration of size, shape, and motion. That some things in the world, should have no other reason given of them, may not only be tolerable, but rational, as in the objects and operations on the organs of sense, those affections which are mistaken for real qualities, &c. But that all those effects which are seen in nature, should have no other cause but the different configuration and motion of Atoms, is the height of folly as well as impiety. To imagine that the particles of matter, as they are in men, should be capable of sensation, memory, Intellection, volition, &c. meerly because of a different shape, size, and motion from what they have in a piece of wood, is a riddle that requires a new configuration of Atoms in us to make us understand. May it not be hoped, that at least one time or other by this casual concurrence of Atoms, the particles may light to be of such a nature in stones, as to make them fly; in plants, to make them all sensitive; and in beasts to make them reason and discourse? What may hinder such a configuration or motion of particles, if all these effects are to be imputed to no higher principle? We see in other bodies what different appearances are caused by a sudden alteration of the particles of the matter of which they are compounded; why may it not fall out so in the things mentioned? Neither can this be unreasonable to demand, 1. Because the motion of these particles of matter is casual still according to them; and who knows what chance may do? for the seminal principles themselves are, I suppose, according to them of the same uniform matter with the rest of the world, and so are liable to different motion and configuration.

2. Because all particles of matter are supposed to be in continual motion, because of that disseminated Vacuity which is presumed to be in the world, and because a Coacervate vacuity is not only asserted as possible, but as probably existent: I assume only then (that which is insisted on as probable) viz. that that space which lies between our Atmosphere and the Stars is empty of any other thing, but only the rays of the Stars which pass through it; I then supposing it a vacuity, whether would not the particles of those bodies which

which lie *contiguous* to that *space* presently *dislodge* from the *bodies* wherein they are, and begin a new *Rendezvous* of *Atoms* there? for all *Atoms* are supposed to be in *perpetual motion*; and the cause assigned, why in *solid bodies* they do not *fly away*, is because of the *repercussion* of other *Atoms*, that when they once begin to *stir*, they receive such *knocks* as make them *quiet* in their places. Now this cannot hold in the *bodies contiguous* to this *space*; for both those *bodies* are more *fluid*, and so there is no such *knocking* of *particles* to keep them at *rest*; but which is more, those which are *contiguous* have nothing at all to hinder them from *motion*, and so those *particles* will necessarily *remove* into that *empty space* where there is no *impediment* of their *motion*, and so the next *Atoms* to those must *remove*, because that *space* wherein the other were is made *empty* by their *removal*; and so the next, and so on, till not only the *air*, but the whole *mass* of the *earth* will on *supposition* of such a *vacuity* be dissolved into its first *particles*, which will all *mutiny* in the several *bodies* wherein they are, and never *rest* till they come to that *empty space*, where they may again *Rendezvous* together. So dangerous is the news of *Liberty*, or of an *empty space* to these *Democratical particles* of the *Universe*. Neither can I see how a *disseminated vacuity* can *salve* the difficulty; for those *particles* of the most *solid bodies*, being in continual *motion*, and the ground of their *union* being *repercussion*, it thence follows that towards that part where the *disseminated vacuum* is, the *particles* meeting with no such *strokes* may fairly take their leaves of the *bodies* they are in, and so one succeed in the place of another, till the *configuration* of the whole be altered, and consequently different *appearances* and *effects* may be caused in the same *bodies*, though it results from *seminal principles*. So that according to the *Atomical principles*, no rational account can be given of those *effects* which are seen in nature. This *Dionysius* in *Eusebius* urgeth against the *Atomists*, that from the same *principles* without evident *reason* given for it, they make of the same *uniform matter* some things conspicuous to sense, others not, some *short-lived*, others *extreamly long-lived*. *Præp. Evang.*
l. 14. c. 24.

Τίνα ὃ τέτον μὲν εἶναι καὶ τὸ αὐτὸς ἀπαύτως
ἴστας

ἰσῆας, καὶ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀρδάρτε φύσεως, πλὴν ὅτι μεγεθῶν, ὡς φασι, καὶ ὅτι σχημάτων, τὰ μὲν ἔστι θεῖα καὶ ἀκήρετα καὶ αἰώνια, ὡς αὐτοὶ φησίουεν ἂν, σώματα, ἢ μακραινὰ γε καὶ τὸ ἴσως ὀνομαζόμενα, φαίνονται τε καὶ ἀδανῇ; *What ground can there be assigned of so vast a difference between things if they all be of the same nature, and differ only in size and shape?* faith that excellent person, who there with a great deal of eloquence layes open the folly of the *Atomical Philosophy*, θαυμαστὸν γὰρ ὅτι ἀτόμων, ἢ δημοκρατία, διζευκμένων τε ἀμύληας τῷ φίλων καὶ ἀπειλευκόμενων εἰς μίαν τε κατασκευάζει συνοικίαν ἐπιγροθίων. *It is a rare Democracy of Atoms*, faith he, *where the friendly Atoms meet and embrace each other, and from thenceforward live in the closest society together.*

Laert. l. 10.

2. Not only the *variety*, but the *exact order and beauty* of the world is a thing *unaccountable* by the *Atomical hypothesis*. Were the whole world still a *Hesiods Chaos* (from the consideration of which *Diogenes Laertius* tells us *Epicurus* began to *Philosophize*) we might probably believe an *agitation of particles* (supposing matter created) might settle it in such a *confused manner*; but that there should be nothing else but a blind *impetus* of *Atoms* to produce those *vast* and most *regular motions* of the *heavenly bodies*, to order the *passage of the Sun* for so great *convenience of nature*, and for the alternate *succession* of the *seasons* of the year, which should cut such *channels* for the *Ocean*, and keep that *vast body* of the *water* (whose *surface* is higher then the earth) from *overflowing* it, which should furnish the earth with such *seminal and prolifick principles*, as to provide *food and nourishment* for those *Animals* which live upon it, and furnish out every thing necessary for the *comfort and delight* of *mans life*; to believe I say, that all these *things* came only from a *blind and fortuitous concurrence* of *Atoms*, is the most *prodigious piece of credulity and folly*, that *humane nature* is subject to. But this part which concerns the *order and beauty* of the *parts* of the *Universe*, and the argument thence, that it could be no *blind fortuitous principle*, but an *Infinitely wise God*, hath been so fully and judiciously handled by a *learned Person* already, that I shall rather choose to refer the Reader to his *discourse* than insist any more upon it.

D. H. More
Antid. against
Atheism, part
2.

3. The

3. *The production of mankind* is a thing which the *Atomists* are most shamefully puzzled with, as well as the *Formation of the internal parts of mans body*, of which I have already spoken in the precedent Chapter. It would pity one to see what lamentable shifts the *Atomists* are put to, to find out a way for the production of mankind, viz. That our teeming mother the earth, at last cast forth some kind of bags like wombs upon the surface of the earth, and these by degrees breaking, at last came out children, which were nourished by a kind of juyce of the earth like milk, by which they were brought up till they came to be men. Oh what will not *Atheists* believe, rather than a *Deity* and *Providence* ! But lest we should seem to wrong the *Atomists*, hear what *Censorinus* saith of *Epicurus* ; *Is enim credidit limo calefactos uteros nescio quos, radicibus terræ coherentes, primum increvisse, & infantibus ex se editis ingenitum lactis humorem, natura ministrante præbuisse ; quos ita educatos & adultos, genus humanum propagasse.* But because *Lucretius* may be thought to speak more impartially in the case, how rarely doth he describe it?

*Censor. de ale
Nat. c. 2.*

*Crescebant uteri terræ radicibus apti,
Quos ubi tempore maturo patefecerit æras
Infantum, fugiens humorem, aurasque petissens,
Convertebat ibi natura foramina terræ,
Et succum venis cogebat fundere apertis
Consimilem lactis ; sicut nunc fœmina quæque
Quum peperit dulci repletur lacte, quod omnis
Impetus in mammas convertitur ille alimenti :
Terra cibum pueris, vestem vapor, herba cubile
Præbebat, multa & molli lanugine abundans.*

Had *Lucretius* been only a *Poet*, this might have passed for a handsomly described *Fable* : but to deliver it for a piece of *Philosophy*, makes it the greater *Mythologie* : that mans body was formed out of the earth we believe, because we have reason so to do ; but that the earth should cast forth such folliculi, as he expresseth it, and that men should be brought up in such a way as he describes, deserves a place among the

most incredible of *Poetick Fables*. But if *Poets* must be credited, how much more like a man did he speak, who told us,

*Natus homo est ; sive hunc divino semine fecit
Ille opifex rerum, Mundi melioris origo ;
Sive recens tellus, seductaque nuper ab alto
Æthere, cognati retinebat semina cœli ;
Quam satus Iapeto mistam fluvialibus undis,
Finxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta Deorum.*

Thus have we considered the *Epicurean Hypothesis*, both as to the *Principles* on which it stands, and the *suitableness* of it to the *Phænomena* of the *Universe* ; and I suppose now there cannot be the least shadow of reason found from the *Atomical Philosophy* to make us at all *Question* that account of the *Origine* of the *Universe*, which ascribes it not to the fortuitous concurrence of *Atoms*, but to the *Infinite wisdom* of a *Deity*. I conclude then this discourse of the *Epicurean Hypothesis* with the words of *Antemædon* in the *Greek Epigram*.

*Antholog. l. 1.
c. 15.*

Ταῦτ' εἰδὼς, σοφὸς, ἴδρι, μάτῳ δ' ἐπίκερυν ἕασον
ἢ τὸ κενὸν ζῆσθαι, καὶ τίνας αἱ μωρὰδες.

*Learn to be wise ; let Epicurus chafe
To find his Atoms, and his empty space.*

Seet. 18.

I come now to the last *Hypothesis* mentioned, which undertakes to give an account of the *Origine* of the *Universe* from the meer *Mechanical Laws* of motion and matter. Which is the *Hypothesis* of the late famous *French Philosopher* *M. Des Cartes*. For although there be as much reason as charity to believe that he never intended his *Hypothesis* as a foundation of *Atheism*, having made it so much his business to assert the existence of a *Deity*, and immateriality of the soul ; yet because it is apt to be abused to that end by persons *Atheistically* disposed, because of his ascribing so much to the power of matter : we shall therefore so far consider it as it undertakes

*Princip. p. 3.
Art. 46, &c.*

dertakes to give an account of the *Origine* of the *Universe* without a *Deity*. His *Hypothesis* therefore is briefly this. He takes it for granted, that all the *matter* of the *world* was at first of one *Uniform nature*, *divisible* into innumerable *parts*, and divided into many, which were all in *motion*: from hence he supposeth, 1. That all the *matter* of which the *Universe* is composed, was at first divided into equal particles of an indiffer-ent size, and that they had all such a motion as is now found in the world. 2. That all those particles were not at first *Spherical*, because many such little *Globes* joyned together will not fill up a continued space, but that of what ever figure they were at first, they would by continued motion become *spherical*, because they would have various circular motions; for seeing that at first they were moved with so great force, that one particle would be disjoyned from the other, the same force continuing would serve to cut off all angles which are supposed in them, by their frequent occursions against each other; and so when the angles were cut off, they would become *spherical*. 3. He supposeth that no space is left empty, but when those round particles being joyned, leave some intervalls between them, there are some more subtile particles of matter, which are ready to fill up those void spaces, which arise from those angles which were cut off from the other particles to make them *spherical*; which fragments of particles are so little, and acquire thereby such a celerity of motion, that by the force of that, they will be divided into innumerable little fragments, and so will fill up all those spaces which other particles could not enter in at. 4. That those particles which fill up the intervals between the *spherical* ones, have not all of them the same celerity of motion, because some of them are more undivided than others are, which filled up the space between three *Globular* particles when their angles were cut off, and therefore those particles must necessarily have very angular figures, which are unfit for motion, and thence it comes to pass that such particles easily stick together, and transfer the greatest part of their motion upon those other particles which are less, and therefore have a swifter motion; and because these particles are to pass through such triangular spaces which lye in the midst of three *Globular* particles touching each other, therefore he supposeth them as to their breadth

and depth to be of a triangular figure, but because these particles are somewhat long; and the globular particles through which they pass with so swift motion have their rotation about the poles of the Heavens, thence he supposes that those triangular particles come to be wreathed. Now from these things being thus supposed, *Des Cartes* hath ingenuously and consonantly to his principles undertaken to give an account of the most noted Phenomena of the world, and those three sorts of particles mentioned he makes to be his three elements; the first is that subtil matter which was supposed to arise from the cuttings off the angles of the greater particles; and of this he tells us the Sun and fixed Stars consist, as those particles of that subtil matter being in continual motion have made those several vortices or ætherial whirlpools. The second element consists of the spherical particles themselves, which make up the Heavens; out of the third element, which are those wreathed particles, he gives an account of the formation of the earth, and Planets, and Comets; and from all of them by the help of those common affections of matter, size, figure, motion, &c. he undertakes to give an account of the Phenomena of the world. How far his principles do conduce to the giving mens minds satisfaction, as to the particular Phenomena of nature, is not here our business to enquire, but only how far these principles can give an account of the Origine of the Universe without a Deity? And that it cannot give a satisfactory account how the world was framed without a Deity, appears by the two grand suppositions on which all his elements depend, both which cannot be from any other principle but God. Those are, 1. The existence of matter in the world which we have already proved cannot be independent on God, and necessarily existent; and therefore supposing that matter existent and put into motion, would grind it self into those several particles by him supposed, yet this cannot give any account of the Origine of the Universe without a Deity. 2. The motion of the particles of matter supposeth a Deity; for matter is no self-moving principle, as hath been fully demonstrated in several places by that judicious Philosopher Dr. H. More, who plainly manifests that if motion did necessarily belong to matter, it were impossible there

*Antidote b. 2.
ch. 1.
Immortality
of the soul, b.
B.C. II. f. 2, &c.
Ep. 3. ad Car-
tes. p. 88.*

there should be *Sun*, or *Stars*, or *Earth*, or *Man* in the *World*; for the *matter* being *uniform*, it must have equal *motion* in all its *particles*, if *motion* doth belong to it. For *motion* being supposed to be *natural* and *essential* to *matter*, must be *alike* every where in it, and therefore every *particle* must be supposed in *motion* to its utmost *capacity*, and so every *particle* is *alike* and *moved alike*: and therefore there being no *prevalency* at all in any one *particle* above another in *bigness* or *motion*, it is manifest that this *universal matter*, to whom *motion* is so *essential* and *natural*, will be *ineffectual* for the producing of any *variety* of *appearances* in *nature*; for nothing could be *caused* by this *thin* and *subtile matter*, but what would be wholly *imperceptible* to any of our *senses*: and what a strange kind of *visible world* would this be? From hence then it *appears*, that there must be an infinitely *powerful* and *wise God*, who must both put *matter* into *motion*, and *regulate* the *motion* of it, in order to the producing all those *varieties* which appear in the world. And this necessity of the *motion* of *matter* by a *power* given it from *God*, is freely acknowledged by Mr. *Des Cartes* himself in these words; *Considero materiam sibi libere permissam, & nullum aliunde impulsus suscipientem, ut plane quiescentem; illa autem impellitur à Deo, tantundem motus sive translationis in ea conservante quantum ab initio posuit.* So that this great improver and discoverer of the *Mechanical power* of *matter*, doth freely confess the necessity not only of *Gods* giving *motion* in order to the *Origine* of the *Universe*, but of his conserving *motion* in it for the *upholding* it: So that we need not fear from this *Hypothesis* the excluding of a *Deity* from being the prime *efficient cause* of the world. All the question then is concerning the particular *manner*, which was used by *God* as the *efficient cause* in giving being to the world. As to which I shall only in general suggest what *Maimonides* sayes of it. *Omnia simul creata erant, & postea successive ab invicem separata*; although I am somewhat inclinable to that of *Gassendus*, *majus est mundus opus, quam ut assequi mens humana illius molitionem possit*: To which I think may be well applied that speech of *Solomon*: *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the*

Resp. ad ep. 3.
H. Mori. p. 104.

More Nevoch.
l. 2. c. 30.
Physic. s. 1. l. 7.
c. 6.

Ecc. 8. 17.

the Sun; because though a man labour to seek it out, yea further, though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.

CHAP. II.

Of the Origine of Evil.

Of the Being of Providence. Epicurus his arguments against it refuted. The necessity of the belief of Providence in order to Religion. Providence proved from a consideration of the nature of God and the things of the world. Of the Spirit of nature. The great objections against Providence propounded. The first concerns the Origine of evil. God cannot be the author of sin if the Scriptures be true. The account which the Scriptures give of the fall of man, doth not charge God with mans fault. Gods power to govern man by Laws, though he gives no particular reason of every Positive precept. The reason of Gods creating man with freedom of will, largely shewed from Simplicius; and the true account of the Origine of evil. Gods permitting the fall makes him not the author of it. The account which the Scriptures give of the Origine of evil, compared with that of Heathen Philosophers. The antiquity of the opinion of ascribing the Origine of evil to an evil principle. Of the judgement of the Persians, Egyptians and others about it. Of Manichaeism. The opinion of the ancient Greek Philosophers; of Pythagoras, Plato, the Stoicks; the Origine of evil not from the necessity of matter. The remainders of the history of the fall among the Heathens. Of the malignity of Dæmons. Providence vindicated as to the sufferings of the good, and impunity of bad men. An account of both from natural light, manifested by Seneca, Plutarch, and others.

Seet. 1.

IT being now manifested not only that there is a God, but that the world had its *Being* from him; it thence follows by an *easie* and *rational Deduction*, that there is a particular hand of *Divine providence*, which upholds the world in its *Being*, and wisely disposeth all events in it. For it is a most
irrational

irrational and absurd opinion to assert a *Deity* and deny providence ; and in nothing did *Epicurus* more discover the weakness and puerility of his judgement than in this. Indeed, if *Epicurus* had no other design in asserting a *Deity*, than (as many ancient *Philosophers* imagined) to avoid the imputation of direct *Artheism* ; and yet to take away all foundations of Religion, he must needs be said to serve his *Hypothesis* well, though he did assert the Being of an excellent nature which he called *God* ; while yet he made him sit as it were with his elbows folded up in the *Heavens*, and taking no cognizance of humane actions. For he well knew, that if the belief of *Divine Providence* were once rooted out of mens minds, the thoughts of an excellent Being above the *Heavens*, would have no more awe or power upon the hearts and lives of men, than the telling men that there are Jewels of inestimable value in the *Indies*, makes them more ready to pay taxes to their *Princes*. For that *Philosopher* could not be ignorant, that it is not worth but power, nor speculation but interest that rules the world. The poor *Tenant* more regards his petty *Landlord*, than the greatest *Prince* in the world that hath nothing to do with him ; and he thinks he hath great reason for it ; for he neither fears punishment, nor hopes for reward from him ; whereas his *Landlord* may dispossess him of all he hath upon displeasure, and may advantage him the most if he gains his favour : Supposing then that there were such an excellent Being in the world which was compleatly happy in himself, and thought it an impairing of his happiness to trouble himself with an inspection of the world ; Religion might then be indeed derived à *relegendo*, but not à *religando* ; there might be some pleasure in contemplating his nature, but there could be no obligation to obedience. So that *Epicurus* was the first founder of a kind of *Philosophical Antinomianism* , placing all Religion in a veneration of the *Deity* purely for its own excellency without any such mercenary eye (as those who serve *God* for their own ends, as they say, are apt to have) to reward and punishment. And I much doubt that good woman whom the story goes of, who in an *Enthusiastick* posture ran up and down the streets with emblems in her hands, fire in the one

as

as she said to *burn up Heaven*, and *water* in the other to *quench Hell*, that men might serve *God* purely for himself; would if she had compassed her design, soon have brought *Profelytes* enough to *Epicurus*, and by *burning Heaven* would have *burnt up the cords of Religion*, and in *quenching Hell* would have *extinguished the awe and fear of a Deity* in the world. Indeed the incomparable excellency and perfection which is in the *Divine Nature*, to *spirits* advanced to a noble and generous height in *Religion*, makes them exceedingly value their choice; while they *disregard* whatever rivals with *God* for it; but were it not for those *Magnetical hooks* of obedience and eternal interest, there are few would be drawn to a due consideration of, much less a delight in so amiable and excellent a nature. And it is impossible to conceive, why *God* in the revelation of his Will should ever so much as mention a future punishment, or promise an eternal reward, were not the consideration of these things the sinews of *Religion*.

Sect. 2.

Which they whose design was to undermine the very foundations on which all *Religion* was built, understood far better, than those weak pretended *advancers of Religion*, who while in such a way they pretend to advance it, do only blow it up. For if men ought not to have an eye and respect to their own future condition, nor serve *God* on the account of his power to make our souls miserable or happy, much less ought men to serve *God* with any regard to his *Providence*, since the matters which *Providence* is imployed about in this world, are of infinitely less moment, than those which concern our future state. And if we are to have no eye on *Divine providence* in the exercise of *Religion*, we shall scarce be able to understand for what end *God* should take so much care of mankind, and manifest so much of his goodness to them, were it not to quicken them in their search after him, and excite them to the more cheerful obedience to him. And when once we question to what end *God* troubles himself with the world, we are come next door to *Epicurus*, and may in few steps more delight in the flowers of his Garden. For this was his strongest plea against *Providence*, that it was beneath the Majesty and excellency of the *Divine nature* to stoop so low and

and trouble himself so far, as to regard what was done on earth. This being one of his *Rata Sententia* or *undoubted* Ding. Laert. maxims. τὸ μακάριον ἐὶ ἀθάνατον ὅτι οὐδὲν ἐγγίκατα ἔχει. ὅτι ἀλλοφ. l. 10. μακάριον, The Blessed and Immortal Being, neither hath any employment himself, nor troubles himself with others. Which as Maximus Tyrius well observes, is rather a description of a Sardanapalus than a Deity; nay of a worse than a Sardanapalus; for he in the midst of all his softness and effeminacy Dissert. 29. would yet entertain some counsels for the safety and good of his Empire; but Epicurus his Deity is of so tender a nature, that the least thought of business would quite spoil his happiness. This opinion of Epicurus made the more raised-spirited Moralists so far condemn the unworthy apprehensions which he entertained of the Divine nature, that they degraded him from the very title of a Philosopher in it, and ranked him beneath the most fabulous Poets, who had writ such unworthy things of their Gods, as is evident by the censures which Tully, Plutarch and others pass upon him for Tully de Finib. l. 1. De nat. Deor. l. 2. Plutarch. advers. Colot. this very opinion. And they tell him that some of their own men were of a more noble and excellent spirit than Epicurus his Deity, who abhorred softness and idleness, and made it their greatest delight to do good to their Countries. But Epicurus must needs make his God of his own humour (the usual flattery which men bear to themselves, to think that most excellent which they delight in most) as Xenophanes was wont to say of his horse, if he were to describe a God, it would be with a curled main, a broad chest, &c. and in every thing like himself. Had Epicurus himself so little of an Athenian in him, as not to make it some part of his delight to understand the affairs of the world? or at least did he take no pleasure in the walks of his famous garden, nor to order his trees, and set his flowers, and contrive every thing for his own delight? Would Epicurus then count this a part of his happiness? and is it inconsistent with the happiness of the Deity to take notice of the world and order all things in it for his own glory? Must so excellent a nature as Gods was by his own acknowledgement, be presently tired with business, when the more excellent any nature is, the more active and vigorous it is, the more able to comprehend and dispatch

matters of moment with the least *disturbance* to its self? Is it *pleasure* to a *Nurse* to fill the *child* with her *milk*? doth the *Sun* rejoyce to *help* the *world* with his *constant light*? and doth a *Fountain* murmur till it be *delivered* of its *streams* which may *refresh* the *ground*? and is it no *delight* to the *Divine nature* to behold the *effects* of his *goodness* upon the *world*? We see here then the *foundation* on which *Epicurus* went, *viz.* that his *God* must be like *himself*, or there must be *none*; and truly he might more suitably to his principles question his *existence*, than supposing his *existence* deny his *Providence* on such *miserable* accounts as these are, which yet are the chief which either *Epicurus* or *Lucretius* could bring against it, from the consideration of the *Divine nature*.

Sett. 3.

The which to any one who considers it, doth necessarily *infer* a peculiar *eye* and *hand* of *Providence* in the *world*. For can we imagine that a *Being* of *Infinite knowledge* should be *ignorant* of what is *done* in the *world*? and of *Infinite power*, should *stand by* and leave things to *chance* and *fortune*? which were at first *contrived* and brought into *Being* by the *contrivance* of his *Wisdom*, and *exercise* of his *Power*. And where the *foundation* of *existence* lies wholly and solely in the power of an *Infinite Being* producing, the ground of *continuance* of that *existence* must lye in the same power *conserving*. When men indeed *effect* any thing, the *work* may continue, whatever become of him that did it; but the *reason* of that is, because what man doth, is out of *matter* already *existent*, and his *work* is only setting *materials* together; but now what *God* effects, he absolutely gives a *Being* to, and therefore its *duration* depends on his *conservation*. What is once in its *Being*, I grant, will continue till some greater force than its self put it out of *Being*; but withal I add, that *Gods withdrawing his Conservation* is so great a force, as must needs put that *Being* which had its *existence* from his power, out of the *condition* it was in by it. The *Light* of the *Sun* continues in the *air*, and as long as the *Sun* communicates it, nothing can extinguish the *light*, but what will put out the *Sun*: but could we suppose the *Sun* to *withdraw his beams*, what becomes of the *light* then?

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This is the case of all *Beings*, which come from an *Infinite power*; their *subsistence* depends on a continual emanation of the same power which gave them *Being*: and when once this is withdrawn, all those *Beings* which were produced by this power must needs relapse into nothing. Besides, what dependence is there upon each other in the *moments* of the duration of any created *Being*? The mode of existence in a creature is but contingent and possible, and nothing is implied in the notion of an *existent creature*, beyond meer possibility of existence: what is it then which gives *actual existence* to it? that cannot be *its self*: for it would be necessarily *existent*: if another then gives *existence*, this *existence* must wholly depend upon *him* who gave it: for nothing can continue *existence* to *its self*, but what may give it to *its self*, (for it gives it for the *moment* it continues it) and what gives *existence* to *its self*, must necessarily exist, which is repugnant to the very notion of a created *Being*: So that either we must deny a possibility of non-existence, or annihilation in a creature, which follows upon necessity of existence, or else we must assert that the duration or continuance of a creature in its *Being* doth immediately depend on *Divine Providence* and *Conservation*, which is with as much reason as frequency said to be a continued Creation. But yet further: was an *Infinite Wisdom*, and power necessary to put *things* into that order they are in? and is not the same necessary for the Governing of them? I cannot see any reason to think that the power of matter when set in motion, should either bring things into that exquisite order and dependence which the parts of the world have upon each other: much less that by the meer force of that first motion all things should continue in the state they are in. *Perpetual motion* is yet one of the desiderata of the world: the most exquisite Mechanism cannot put an engine beyond the necessity of being looked after: can we then think this dull, unactive matter, meerly by the force of its first motion should be able still to produce the effects which are seen in the world, and to keep it from tumbling, at least by degrees, into its pristine Chaos? It was an *Infinite Power*, I grant, which gave that first motion? but that it gave power to continue that motion till the Conflagration

gration of the world, remains yet to be proved. Some therefore finding that in the present *state* of the world, *matter* will not *serve* for all the noted and common *Phænomena* of the world, have called in the help of a *Spirit of Nature*, which may serve instead of a *Man-midwife* to *Matter*, to help her in her production of things. Or, as though *God* had a *Plurality* of worlds to look after, they have taken care to substitute him a *Vicar* in this, which is the *Spirit of Nature*. But we had rather believe *God* himself to be perpetually *Resident* in the world, and that the power which gives life, and being and motion to every thing in the world, is nothing else but his own *providence*; especially since we have learnt from himself, that it is in him we live and move and

Act. 17. 28. have our being.

Seet. 4.

Thus then we see a necessity of asserting *Divine Providence* whether we consider the *Divine Nature*, or the *Phænomena* of the world; but yet the case is not so clear, but there are two grand objections behind, which have been the continual exercise of the wits of inquisitive men almost in all ages of the world. The one concerns the first *Origine* of evil; the other concerns the dispensations of providence, whence it comes to pass that good men fare so hard in the world, when the bad triumph and flourish; if these two can be cleared with any satisfaction to reason, it will be the highest vindication of *Divine Providence*, and a great evidence of the *Divinity* of the *Scriptures*, which gives us such clear light and direction in these profound speculations, which the dim reason of man was so much to seek in.

I begin with the *Origine* of evil; for, if there be a hand of providence which orders all things in the world, how comes evil then into it, without Gods being the Author of it? Which is a speculation of as great depth as necessity, it highly concerning us to entertain the highest apprehensions of Gods holiness, and how far he is from being the author of sin; and it is likewise a matter of some Difficulty so to explain the

Orig. c. Cels.
L. 4. p. 207.

Origine of evil as to make it appear that God is not the author of it. I easily then assent to what *Origen* saith on this subject, when *Celsus* upon some mistaken places of Scripture, had charged the Scripture with laying the *Origine* of evil

evil upon God; ἐν ἅλλοις τοῖς ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐξετάσ-
ως δέδοται, διὰ τὸν ὅτι τῇ φύσει ἡμῶν, ἐν ταῖς καὶ ἡ ἡ κα-
κῶν παχέειν ἀν γένεσις. If any thing which calls for our en-
quiry be of difficult investigation, that which concerns the Ori-
gine of evils is such a thing; and as Simplicius well be-
gins his discourse on this subject; πάλιν ὁ ἡμετέριος ἡ κακῶν ὁ
λόγος μὴ καλῶς διοιδαθείς, καὶ τὸ περὶ τὸ θεῖον ἀπείρις ἀπὸ
χρόνου, καὶ τὸ πρὸ ἡμῶν ἐναρξίας τὰς ἀρχὰς διετάξατο, καὶ πολλὰς
καὶ ἀλύτους ἀπείρις ἐνέβαλε τοῖς μὴ καλῶς ἀπολογούσας αὐτῶν.
The disputes concerning the nature and origine of evil, not being
well stated, is the cause of great impiety towards God, and per-
verts the principles of good life, and involves them in innume-
rable perplexities who are not able to give a rational account of
it. So much then is it our great concernment to fix on sure
grounds in the resolution of this important question; in which
I intend not to lanch out into the depth and intricacies of it,
as it relates to any internal purposes of Gods will, (which is
beyond our present scope) but I shall only take that account
of it which the Scripture plainly gives in relating the fall of
the first man. For the clearing of which I shall proceed in
this method :

Comment. in
Epist. c. 34.

1. That if the Scripture be true, God cannot be the author of sin.

2. That the account which the Scripture gives of the Origine of evil, doth not charge it upon God.

3. That no account given by Philosophers of the Origine of evil, is so clear and rational as this is.

4. That the most material circumstances of this account are attested by the Heathens themselves.

1. That if the Scriptures be true, God cannot be the author of sin. For if the Scriptures be true, we are bound without hesitation to yield our assent to them in their plain and direct affirmations, and there can be no ground of suspending assent, as to any thing which pretends to be a Divine Truth, but the want of certain evidence, whether it be of Divine Revelation or no. No doubt it would be one of the most effectual wayes to put an end to the numerous controversies of the Christian world (especially to those bold disputes concerning the method and order of Gods decrees) if the plain

and undoubted *assertions* of *Scripture* were made the *Rule* and *Standard*, whereby we ought to *judge* of such *things* as are more *obscure* and *ambiguous*. And could men but rest contented with those *things* which concern their eternal *happinefs*, and the *means* in order to it (which on that account are written with all imaginable *perspicuity* in *Scripture*) and the *moment* of all other *controversies* be judged by their reference to these, there would be fewer *controversies* and more *Christians* in the world. Now there are two grand *principles* which concern mens *eternal* condition, of which we have the greatest *certainty* from *Scripture*, and on which we may with safety *rely*, without perplexing our minds about those more nice and subtle *speculations* (which it may be are incapable of all full and particular resolution) and those are, *That the ruine and destruction of man is wholly from himself*; and *that his salvation is from God alone*. If then mans *ruine* and *misery* be from *himself*; which the *Scripture* doth so much *inculcate* on all occasions; then without *controversie* that which is the *cause* of all the *misery* of humane *nature*, is wholly from himself too, which is, *sin*. So that if the main *scope* and *design* of the *Scripture* be true, *God* cannot be the author of *that*, by which (without the intervention of the mercy of *God*) mans *misery* *unavoidably* falls upon him. For with what *authority* and *Majesty* doth *God* in the *Scripture* forbid all manner of *sin*? with what *earnestness* and *importunity* doth he woo the sinner to forsake his *sin*? with what *loathing* and *detestation* doth he mention *sin*? with what *justice* and *severity* doth he *punish* *sin*? with what *wrath* and *indignation* doth he threaten contumacious sinners? And is it possible, (after all this and much more, recorded in the *Scriptures*, to express the *holiness* of *Gods* nature, his *hatred* of *sin*, and his appointing a day of judgement for the solemn punishment of sinners,) to imagine that the *Scriptures* do in the least ascribe the *Origine* of *evil* to *God*, or make him the *Author* of *Sin*? Shall not the judge of all the world do right? will a *God* of *Infinite Justice*, *Purity*, and *Holiness*, punish the sinner for that which himself was the *cause* of? Far be such unworthy thoughts from our apprehensions of a *Deity*, much more of that *God* whom we believe

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to have declared his mind so much to the contrary, that we cannot believe *that* and the *Scriptures* to be true together.

Taking it then for granted in the *general*, that God cannot be the author of *sin*, we come to enquire, whether the account which the *Scripture* gives of the *Origine* of evil, doth any way charge it upon God: There are only two wayes, according to the *history* of the fall of man recorded in *Scripture*, whereby men may have any ground to question whether God were the cause of mans fall? either first, by the giving him that positive *Law*, which was the occasion of his fall; or secondly, by leaving him to the liberty of his own will. First, The giving of that positive *Law* cannot be the least ground of laying mans fault on God; because, 1. It was most suitable to the nature of a rational creature to be governed by *Laws*, or declarations of the Will of his Maker; For considering man as a free agent, there can be no way imagined so consonant to the nature of man as this was, because thereby he might declare his obedience to God to be the matter of his free choice. For where there is a capacity of reward, and punishment, and acting in the consideration of them, there must be a declaration of the will of the Law-giver, according to which man may expect either his reward or punishment. If it were suitable to Gods nature to promise life to man upon obedience, it was not unsuitable to it to expect obedience to every declaration of his will; considering the absolute sovereignty and Dominion which God had over man as being his creature, and the indispensable obligation which was in the nature of man to obey whatever his Maker did command him. So that God had full and absolute right to require from man, what he did as to the *Law* which he gave him to obey; and in the general we cannot conceive, how there should be a testimony of mans obedience towards his Creator, without some declaration of his Creators Will. Secondly, God had full power and authority, not only to govern man by *Laws*, but to determine mans general obligation to obedience to that particular positive precept by the breach of which man fell. If Gods power over man was universal and unlimited, what reason can there be to imagine it should not extend to such

Sect. 5.
2.

such a positive Law? Was it, because the matter of this Law seemed too low for God to command his creature? but whatever the matter of the Law was, obedience to God was the great end of it, which man had testified as much in that Instance of it as in any other whatsoever; and in the violation of it were implied the highest aggravations of disobedience; for Gods power and authority was as much contemned, his goodness slighted, his Truth and faithfulness questioned, his Name dishonoured, his Majesty affronted in the breach of that, as of any other Law whatsoever it had been. If the Law were easie to be observed, the greater was the sin of disobedience; if the weight of the matter was not so great in its self, yet Gods authority added the greatest weight to it; and the ground of obedience is not to be fetched from the nature of the thing required, but from the authority of the Legislator. Or was it then because God concealed from man his counsel in giving of that positive precept? Hath not then a Legislator power to require any thing, but what he satisfies every one of his reason in commanding it? if so, what becomes of obedience and subjection? it will be impossible to make any probative precept on this account; and the Legislator must be charged with the disobedience of his subjects, where he doth not give a particular account of every thing which he requires; which as it concerns humane Legislators (who have not that absolute power and authority which God hath) is contrary to all Laws of Policy and the general sense of the world. This Plutarch gives a good account of when he discourseth so rationally of the sobriety which men ought to use in their inquiries into the grounds and reasons of Gods actions; for, saith he, Physicians will give prescriptions without giving the Patient a particular reason of every circumstance in them: ἐπεὶ γὰρ ὅς τις ἀνθρώποι νόμος τίθεν, τὸ εὐλογον ἀπλῶς ἔχεισι καὶ πάντοτε φαίνουσιν, ὡς καὶ ἡ δοκίμη κοινὴ καλῶς καὶ σωφροσύνης. Neither have humane Laws alwayes apparent reason for them, nay some of them, are to appearance ridiculous; for which he instanceth in that Law of the Lacedaemonian Ephori, μὴ πίνειν μίσκαρα, to which no other reason was annexed but this, καὶ πίνεσθαι τοῖς νόμοις ὡς μὴ χαλεποὶ ὦσιν αὐτοῖς: they commanded every Magistrate at the entrance of his office

De his qui se-
ro puniuntur
à numine.

to shave himself, and gave this reason for it, that they might learn to obey Laws themselves. He further instanceth, in the Roman custom of manumission, their Laws about testaments, Solons Law against neutrality in seditions, and concludes thence, ὅς ὅλος πολλὰς ἀνὰ τὴν ἐξέτασιν νόμων ἀπορίας, μήτε τ' λόγον ἔχων τὸ νομιθεῖν, μήτε τὴν αἰτίαν συνίης ἐκείνης τῶν γραμμῶν. *Any one would easily find many absurdities in Laws, who doth not consider the intention of the Legislator, or the ground of what he requires.* Τί δὲ θαυμάζειν, faith he, εἰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἕως ἡμῶν ὄντων δουλεύειν, ἐκ εὐπορίας δὲ τὸ περὶ τῶν θείων εἰπεῖν, ὅτι νυνὶ λόγῳ τὰς μὲν ὑπερβῶν, τὰς δὲ ὑποβῶν τῶν ἀμαρτανόων καταγγέλλουσιν. *What wonder is it if we are so puzzled to give an account of the actions of men, that we should be to seek as to those of the Deity?* This cannot be then any ground on the account of meer reason, to lay the charge of mans disobedience upon God, because he required from him the observance of that positive command of not eating of the forbidden fruit.

The only thing then left, is, whether God be not lyable to this charge as he left man to the liberty of his will: And that Sect. 6.

may be grounded on two things; either that God did not create man in such a condition, in which it had been impossible for him to have sinned; or that knowing his temptation he did not give him power to resist it. If neither of these will lay any

Imputation of the Origine of evil upon God, then God will appear to be wholly free from it. First, concerning mans being created a free agent; if the determination of the Schools be good, that possibility of sinning is implied in the very notion of a creature, and consequently that impeccability is repugnant to the nature of a created Being; then we see a

necessary reason, why man was created in a state of liberty: but endeavouring to shew that the grounds of our Religion

are not repugnant to natural reason, I shall rather make use of the Testimony of such who professed to be followers of nothing else but reason and Philosophy. Among whom I shall make choice of Simplicius both for the reason he produceth, and because he is farthest from any suspicion of partiality, by reason of his known opposition to the Mosaick History of the Creation. He then in his Commentaries on

Epictetus professedly disputes this very subject of the Origine

Vid. Thom. 1.

p. q. 63. art.

1. Estium in

senten. l. 2.

dist. 7.

Sect. 9.

Com. in Epict.

cap. 34. p. 175.

of evil, and after having rejected that fond opinion of two principles, one of good, and the other of evil, undertakes to give an account whence evil came into the world, which because it tends so much to the illustrating our present subject, I shall give an account of. God, saith he, who is the fountain and principle of all good, not only produced things which were in themselves good, nor onely those things which were of a middle nature, but the extreame too, which were such things which were apt to be perverted from that which is according to nature, to that which we call evil. And that after those bodies which were (as he supposeth) incorruptible, others were produced which are subject to mutation and corruption; and so after those souls which were immutably fixed in good, others were produced which were lyable to be perverted from it; that so the riches of Gods goodness might be displayed in making to exist all beings which are capable of it; and that the Universe might be perfect in having all sorts of Beings in it. Now, he supposeth, that all those Beings which are above this sublunary world are such as are immutably good, and that the lowest sort of Beings which are lyable to be perverted to evil, are such which are here below. Therefore, saith he, the soul being of a more noble and immutable nature, while it is by it self, doth not partake of evil; but it being of a nature apt to be joyned with these terrestrial bodies (by the providence of the author of the Universe who produced such souls, that so both extreame might be joyned by the bonds of vital union) thereby it becomes sensible of those evils and pains which the body is subject to; but these things are not properly evils but rather good, considering our terrestrial bodies as parts of the Universe which is upheld by the changes and vicissitudes which are in this lower world? Which he largely discourfes on to shew that those particular alterations which are in bodies, do conduce rather to the perfection and beauty of the Universe, than are any real evils in it. But now, saith he, for the origine of those things which are properly evils, viz. moral evils, which are τὰ ἡθελήματα τῶν ψυχῶν ἀνθρώπων, the lapses and errors of the humane soul, we are to consider, that there are souls of a more excellent nature than ours are, which are immutably good; and the souls of brutes are of a lower kind than

ours

ours are, and yet are middle between the rational & vegetative, having something in them parallel both to the appetites and evils which are in men, which will therefore be understood by an account of the other. Ἡ ὁ ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ, μέση πρὸς θεοῦ καὶ τὰ ἀνὰ Pag. 180. ed. ἄνω μενσῶν ψυχῶν, διὰ τε τὴν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἐστὶν ἀκρότητα, καὶ διὰ Salmasi. τὴν τῆς τοῦ μέθυσιν, καὶ τῇ ἀεὶ κέτω διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα συγγένειαν ἢ

ἀλόγου ζωῆς, καὶ ἀνδραγαθῶς ζωικῆς γινομένη τῶν τε ἀνω καὶ τῶν κατω, διὰ τὴν αὐτῆς οὐκ ἔχουσα, ποτὲ καὶ πρὸς ἐκείνα, ποτὲ ὅμως πρὸς ταῦτα ὁμοιωταί.

The soul of man is *nexus utriusq; mundi*, in the middle between those more excellent Beings which perpetually remain above, with which it partakes in the sublimity of its nature and understanding, and those inferior terrestrial Beings with which it communicates through the vital union which it hath with the body, and by reason of that freedom and indifferency which it hath, it sometimes is assimilated to the one, sometimes to the other of these extreams. So that while it approacheth to the nature of the superior Beings, it keeps it self free from evil, but because of its freedom it may sometimes sink down into these lower things, and so he calls the cause of all evil in the soul τὴν αὐτοδελὴν καὶ ἑαυτῇ εἰς τόνδε θιντὸν τόπον, its voluntary descent into this lower world, and immersing it self in the faculty of terrestrial matter. καὶ φύσιν ἢ ἀμφίβολον ἔλαττον, ἐκ ἀναγκῆς ὡς καὶ κατέστιν ἢ ἀνείσιν, ἀλλ' ὅπως ἔστιν, ὡς ὅταν αὐτὴ θέλῃ κατένευαι τε καὶ ἀνείναι. For though the soul be of a kind of Amphibious nature, yet it is not forced either upwards or downwards, but acts either way according to its internal liberty. But, saith he, while the rational soul keeps that power which it hath in its hands over the body, and makes use of it only as an instrument for its own good; so long it keeps pure and free from any stain of evil; but when it once forgets the similitude it hath with the more excellent Being, and throws away the Scepter of its power, and drowns it self in the body and brutish affections (preferring the pleasure of sense above that of reason) when it so far degenerates below the principles of reason, that instead of commanding the brutish faculties it becomes a slave to them, then it conceives and brings forth evil; but this it doth not through any coaction or necessity, but through the abuse of that power and liberty which it hath: For the choice is a proper action of the soul it self; which he proves from hence, because

God and the Laws, and all good men, do not measure the good and evil of actions so much by the event, as by the will and intention of the person; and that punishment and reward have chiefly a respect to those. And therefore men are pardoned for what they do out of constraint and force, and the fault is ascribed ἐπὶ τῷ πρᾶττοντι ἐκὰς βιάζοντι, not to him that did it, but to him that forced him to the doing of it. And so from hence he concludes, that because of the freedom of the will of man, nothing else can be said to be the author of evil properly, but the soul of man; and concludes that discourse with this excellent speech, Ἐχόντες ἐν τῇ αἰτίᾳ τὸ κακὸν, λαμπρὰ τε φωνῇ βῶντες, ὅπ ὁ Θεὸς κακίας ἀναιτῷ, διότι τὸ κακὸν ἢ ψυχὴ ἐξεργᾷ αὐτεξέκτως, ἢ ἢ ὁ Θεὸς· εἰ μὲν γὰρ βία τὸ κακὸν ἐπεσπεν ἢ ψυχῇ, τάχα ἂν τις τὴν Θεὸν ἠτιάσατο τὸν ἀναιτίως αὐτὴν συγχωροῦσαν βιάσθαι; καὶ τοὶ ἐδὲ κακὸν ἦν τὸ βία πεσπόμενον· κατὰ δὲ πορῶντες αὐτὸ ἀρεμένῃ αὐτὴ ἂν αἰταί λήροιο δικαίως. Having thus found out the true Origine of evil, let us cry out with a loud voice, that God is not the author of sin, because the soul freely doth that which is evil, and not God; for if the soul were forced to do what it doth, one might justly lay the blame on God, who permits such a force to be offered it, neither could it be properly evil which the soul was constrained to; but since it acted freely, out of choice, the soul must alone be accounted the author and cause of evil. Thus we see that God cannot with any shadow of reason be accounted the author of evil, because he gave the soul of man a principle of internal freedom, when the very freedom of acting which the soul had, put it into a capacity of standing as well as falling. And certainly, he can never be said to be the cause of the breaking of a person, who gave him a stock to set up with, and supposed him able to manage it when he gave it him; indeed had not man had this freedom of will, he could not have fallen; but then neither had he been a rational Agent, which supposing no corruption, doth speak freedom of action. So that while we enquire after the Origine of evil we have no other cause to assign it to but mans abuse of that free power of acting which he had; but if we will be so curious as to enquire further, why God did create man with such a freedom of will, and not rather fix his soul immutably on good; if

if the order of beings be no satisfactory reason for it, we can give no other than that why he made man, or the world at all, which was the good pleasure of his Will.

But secondly, *supposing Gods giving man this freedom of will, doth not entitle him to be the author of evil; doth not his leaving man to this liberty of his in the temptation, make him the cause of sin?* I answer no, and that on these accounts. Sect. 7.

1. *Because man stood then upon such terms, that he could not fall but by his own free and voluntary act, he had a power to stand, in that there was no principle of corruption at all in his faculties, but he had a pure and undefiled soul which could not be polluted without its own consent: Now it had been repugnant to the terms on which man stood (which were the tryal of his obedience to his Creator) had he been irresistibly determined any way. Simplicius puts this question after the former discourse, Whether God may not be called the author of sin, because he permits the soul to use her liberty? but, saith he, he that saith God should not have permitted this use of its freedom to the soul, must say one of these two things, either that the soul being of such a nature as is indifferent to good or evil, it should have been wholly kept from the choosing evil, or else that it should have been made of such a nature that it should not have had a power of choosing evil. The first is irrational and absurd; for what freedom and liberty had that been where there was no choice? and what choice could there have been where the mind was necessitated only to one part? For the second we are to consider, saith he, that no evil is in it self desirable, or to be chosen; but withal, if this power of determining it self either way must be taken away, it must be either as something not good, or as some great evil; and whoever saith so, doth not consider, how many things in the world there are, which are accounted good and desirable things, yet are no ways comparable with this freedom of Will. For it excells all sublunary Beings; and there is none would rather desire to be a Brute or Plant than man; if God then shewed his goodness in giving to inferior beings such perfections which are far below this, is it any ways incongruous to Gods nature and goodness to give man the freedom of his actions, and a self-determining*

power, though he permitted him the free use of it? Besides, as that author reasons, had God to prevent mans sin taken away the Liberty of his will, he had likewise destroyed the foundation of all vertue, and the very nature of man; for vertue would not have been such, had there been no possibility of acting contrary; and mans nature would have been divine, because impeccable. Therefore, saith he, though we attribute this self-determining power to God as the Author of it, which was so necessary in the order of the Universe, we have no reason to attribute the Origine of that evil to God which comes by the abuse of that liberty. For, as he further adds, God doth not at all cause that aversion from Good, which is in the soul when it sins, but only gave such a power to the soul, whereby it might turn it self to evil, out of which God might afterwards produce so much good, which could not otherwise have been without it. So consonantly to the Scripture doth that Philosopher speak on this subject.

Pag. 186,
187.

2. God cannot be said to be the author of sin, though he did not prevent the fall of man, because he did not withdraw before his fall any grace or assistance, which was necessary for his standing. Had there been indeed a necessity of supernatural grace to be communicated to man for every moment to continue him in his Innocency, and had God before mans fall withdrawn such assistance from him, without which it were impossible for him to have stood, it would be very difficult freeing God from being the cause of the Fall of man. But we are not put to such difficulties for acquitting God from being the author of sin; for there appears no necessity at all for asserting any distinction of sufficient and efficacious grace in man before his Fall; that the one should belong only to a radical power of standing, the other to every act of good which Adam did; For if God made man upright, he certainly gave him such a power as might be brought into act without the necessity of any supervenient act of grace, to elicit that habitual power into particular actions. If the other were sufficient, it was sufficient for its end; and how could it be sufficient for its end, if notwithstanding that, there were no possibility of standing, unless efficacious help were superadded to it? God would not certainly require any thing

thing from the creature in his integrity, but what he had a power to obey; and if there were necessary further grace to bring the power into act, then the *subtracting* of this grace must be by way of *punishment* to man, which it is hard to conceive for what it should be, before man had sinned, or else God must *subtract* this grace on purpose that man might fall, which would necessarily follow on this supposition, in which case Man would be necessitated to fall, *veluti cum subductis columnis domus necessario corrui*, as one expresseth it, as a house must needs fall when the pillars on which it stood are taken away from it. But now if God withdrew not any effectual grace from man, whereby he must necessarily fall, then though God permit man to use his liberty, yet he cannot be said to be any ways the author of evil, because man had still a *posse si vellet*, a power of standing, if he had made right use of his Liberty, and God never took from man his *adjutorium quo potuit stare*, & *sine quo non potuit*, as Divines call it, man enjoying still his power, though by the abuse of his Liberty he fell into sin; so that granting God to leave man to the use of his Liberty, yet we see God cannot in the least be charged with being the Author of sin, or of the Origine of evil, by the History of the fall of man in Scripture: which was the thing to be cleared.

We come now in the third place to compare that account *Sett. 8.* given of the Origine of evil in Scripture, with that which was embraced by Heathen Philosophers, in point of reason and evidence. There was no one inquiry whatsoever in which those who had nothing but natural light to guide them, were more to seek for satisfaction in, than this concerning the Origine of evil. They saw by continual experience how great a Torrent of both sorts of evils, of sin and punishment, did overflow the world; but they were like the Egyptians, who had sufficient evidence of the overflowing their banks by the River Nile, but could not find out the spring or the head of it. The reason was, as corruption increased in the world, so the means of instruction and knowledge decayed; and so as the Phenomena grew greater, the reason of them was less understood; the knowledge of the History of the first Ages of the world, through which they could

could alone come to the full understanding of the true cause of evil, insensibly decaying in the several Nations: Inſomuch that thoſe who are not at all acquainted with that Hiſtory of the world which was preſerved in *Sacred Records* among the *Jews*, had nothing but their own uncertain conjectures to go by, and ſome kind of obſcure *traditions* which were preſerved among them, which while they ſought to rectifie by their *interpretations*, they made them more *obſcure* and *false* than they found them. They were certain of nothing but that mankind was in a low and degenerate condition, and ſubject to continual miſeries and calamities; they who cryed up the moſt the *αὐτεξέστης*, or the *ſelf-determining power* of the ſoul, could not certainly but ſtrangely wonder, that a *Principle* indifferent to be carried either way, ſhould be ſo almoſt *fatally* inclined to the worſt of them. It was very ſtrange that ſince *Reason* ought to have the command of *Paſſions* by their own acknowledgement, the *brutiſh* part of the ſoul ſhould ſo maſter and enſlave the *rational*, and the *beaſt* ſhould ſtill caſt the *rider* in man, the *ſenſitive appetite* ſhould throw off the power of the *τὸ ὑψημονικόν*, of that *faculty* of the ſoul which was deſigned for the *Government* of all the reſt. The *Philophers* could not be ignorant what *ſlaves* they were themſelves to this *terreſtrial Hyle*, how eaſily their moſt *mettleſom ſouls* were mired in the dirt, how deep they were *ſunk* into corporeal *pleaſures*, that it was paſt the power of their reaſon to help them out. Nay when the ſoul begins to be *ſledged* again, after her *πλεθρόντης*, or *moulting* at her entrance into the body, which *Plato* ſpeaks of, and ſtrives to raiſe her ſelf *above* this lower world, ſhe then feels the *weight* of ſuch *Plummets* hanging at her feet, that they bring her down again to her former *fluttering* up and down in her *Cage* of earth. So *Hierocles* complains, that when *reaſon* begins to carry the ſoul to the perception of the moſt noble objects, the ſoul with a *generous flight* would ſoar above this world, *ὅταν μὴ ταῖς παθητικαῖς ὁλκαῖς ὥσπερ πρὸς μολυβδίνον, καταβῇ εἰς αὐτὴν πρὸς κακίαν*, were it not born down to that which is evil by the force of paſſions, which hang like leads upon the ſouls feet. What a ſtrange unaccountable thing muſt this needs be to thoſe who beheld the conſtancy of

Hierocl. in au-
rea Carmina
p. 17.

of the effect, but were to seek for the cause of it? It could not but be clear to them that the *ἀσέβεια* they were wont to extoll so high, was (in the state man was now in) but a more noble name for slavery; when themselves could not but confess the *πόνη*, or inclination in the soul, was so strong to the evil; and could that be an *even balance*, where there was so much down weight in one of the *scales*? unless they made, as some of them did, the *voluntary inclinations* of the soul to *evil*, an evidence of her *liberty* in this most degenerate condition, as though it were any argument that the *prisoner* was the *freer*, because he delighted himself in the *noise* of his *shackles*. Neither was this disorder alone at home in the soul, where there was still a *Xantippe* scolding with *Socrates*, *passion* striving with *reason*; but when they looked abroad in the world, they could not but observe some strange irregularities in the *converse* among men. What *debaucheries*, *contentions*, *rapines*, *fightings*, and *destroying* each other, and that with the greatest cruelty, and that frequently among *Countrey-men*, *Friends*, nay *Relations*, and *Kindreds*! and could this *hostility* between those of the same nature, and under the most sacred *bonds* of *union*, be the *result* of *nature*, when even *beasts* of *prey* are not such to those of their own *kind*? Besides all this when they summed up the life of *man* together, and took an account of the *weaknesses* and *follies* of *Childhood*, the *heats* and *extravagancies* of *Youth*, the *passions*, *disquietments*, and *disappointments* of men in their strength and height of business, the *inquietude*, *aches*, and *infirmities* of old age, besides the *miseries* which through every one of these all men are subject to, and few escape, into how small a *sum* will the solid *pleasure* and *contentment* of the life of *man* be reduced? Nay if we take those things in the world which men please themselves the most in the enjoyment of, and consider but with what *care* they are *got*, with what *fear* they are *kept*, and with what *certainty* they must be *lost*; and how much the *possession* of any thing falls of the *expectation* of it, and how near men are upon the *top* of *Tenariff* to fall into the *depth* of the *Sea*; how often they are *precipitated* from the height of *prosperity* into the *depth* of *adversity*, we shall find yet much less

that by the greatest *Chymistry* can be extracted of *real satisfaction* out of these things. Whence then should it come that mens *souls* should so delight to feed on these *bushes*, and to embrace these *clouds* and *shadows*, instead of that *real good* which is the true object of the souls desire? They could easily see there was no *pure*, unmixed *good* in the world, but there was a *contemperation* of both together according to that of *Euripides* :

Οὐκ ἂν γίνετο χαῖς ἐπὶ δὲ καὶ κῆρ,
Ἄλλ' ἔστι τις σύμμεσος.

There is a kind of continual mixture of good and evil in the world, which *Socrates* observed upon the rubbing of his *Plat.in Phsd.* thigh where the fetters made it itch, ὡς ἄποιν ὃ ἀνδρες, ἐοικὲς π' ἐν τῷ ἄ καλῶν οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἰδοῖ; ὡς θανάσιος πίπτει πρὸς τὸ δοῦν ἐναντίον ἢ, τὸ λυμένον. *What a strange thing is that which men are wont to call pleasure? how near of kin is it to that which seems so contrary to it, pain?*

Test. 9.

Now the observing the strange and sudden vicissitudes of these things, and what near neighbours *pain* and *pleasure* were to each other, (so that there is frequently a passage out of one into the other) did yet more *entangle* them to give a clear account of the *Origine* of both these. Those who believe there was a *God*, who produced the world and ordered all things in it, did easily attribute whatever was *good* in the world to the *Fountain* of all *goodness*; but that any evil should come from him, they thought it *repugnant* to the very notion of a *Deity*; which they were so far right in, as it concerned the *evil* of *sin*; which we have already shewed *God* could not be the *author* of; but therein they shewed their *ignorance* of the true *cause* of *evil*, that they did not look upon the miseries of life as effects of *Gods Justice* upon the world for the *evil* of *sin*. And therefore that they might set the *Origine* of *evil* far enough off from *God*, they made two different *Principles* of *things*, the one of *good*, and the other of *evil*; this *Plutarch* tells us was the most ancient and universal account which he could meet with of the *origine* of *good* and *evil*. To which purpose we have this ample

Testi-

Testimony of his in his learned discourse, *de Iside & Osiride*, *Plutarch. de*
Διδ. κ. παμπάλαιου αὐτὸν κείμενον ἐν θεολόγων κ. νομοθετῶν, *ἧς τε Isid. & Osir.*
 ποιητῆς κ. φιλοσόφους δόξα, τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀδάσπιστον ἔχουσα, τὴν ὃ π- *P. 369. ed. Fr.*
 σιν ἰγχεῖν κ. συζητάειν, ἐκ ἐν λόγοις μόνον, ἐδὲ ἐν φήμας,
 ἀλλὰ ἐν τε τελευταῖς ἐν τε θυγατρὶς, κ. βαρβάρεισι, κ. Ἑλληνι πολ-
 λαχὺ φειτερομύθου, ὡς ἔτ' αἶνεν κ. ἄλογον κ. ἀκυβέρνητον αὐτοῦ
 τῷ αὐτομάτῳ τὸ πᾶν, ὅτε εἰς ὅσον ὁ κρατὶν κ. καλίσθουσαν,
 ὡστὶ ἀΐαζιν ἢ ποι πειθούσι χαλινούσι λίσθ' ; ἀλλὰ πολλὰ κ. με-
 μυγμένα κακοῖς κ. ἀγαθοῖς· μάλλον ὃ μὴδὲν ὡς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν, ἀ-
 κρατον ἐν αὐτῷ τῆς φύσεως φερέσης· ὃ δὲ πῶς πῶς εἰς ταμίαν, ὡ-
 στὶ νύματι τὰ πρᾶγματα καπιλικῶς διανέμων ἀνακρεδύνουσιν ἡ-
 μῖν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ δὲ ἐναντίον ἀρχῶν, κ. δὲ ἐν ἀντιπάλῳ δυνάμεων,
 τῆς μὲν ὅτι τὰ δεξιὰ κ. κατ' ἐνδοῖαν ὑπὸ καλῆς, τῆς δ' ἐμπαλιν
 ἀνακρεδύνουσιν κ. ἀνακλώσιν, ὃ τε βίθ' μικρὸς, ὃ τε κόσμος εἰ κ.
 μὴ πᾶς, ἀλλ' ὃ φέρει· ἔτ' κ. μὲν σελήνῳ, ἀνῶμαλ' κ.
 ποικίλ' γέρονε, κ. μεταβολὰς πάσης δεχόμεν'· εἰ γὰρ ἐδὲν ἀνα-
 κρεδύνουσιν πύραυς γίνεσθαι, αὐτῶν δ' ἡ κατ' ἀγαθὸν ἐκ ἀν' ὃ παρέρχεται, δὲ
 γίνεσθαι ἰδὲν κ. ἀρχῶν, ὡστὶ ἀγαθὸν κ. κακόν, πῶς φύσιν ἔχουσιν.
 Which words I have the more largely cited because they
 give us the most full account of the antiquity, universality
 and reason of that opinion which asserts two different prin-
 ciples of good and evil. *It is a tradition (saith he) of great an-*
tiquity derived down from the ancient Masters of Divine know-
ledge, and Formers of Common-wealths, to the Poets and Phi-
losophers, whose first author cannot be found, and yet hath met
with firm and unshaken belief, not only in ordinary discourses
and reports, but was spread into the mysteries and sacrifices
both of Greeks and others, that the Universe did not depend on
chance, and was destitute of mind and reason to govern it ;
neither was there one only reason which sate at the stern, or held
the reins, whereby he did order and govern the world ; but since
there is so much confusion and mixture of good and evil in the
world, that nature doth not produce any pure untainted good ;
there is not any one who like a Drawer takes the liquor out of
two severall vessels, and mixeth them together, and after distri-
butes them ; but there are two principles and powers contrary
to each other, whereof one draws us to the right hand, and di-
rects us straight forward, the other pulls us back, and turns
us the other way ; since we see the life of man so mixed as it is ;

and not only that, but the world too, at least so much as is sub-lunary and terrestrial, which is subject to many varieties, irregularities and changes. For if nothing be without a cause, and good cannot be the cause of evil, it necessarily follows, that as there is a peculiar nature and principle, which is the cause of good, so there must be another, which is the cause of evil.

But lest we should think it was only a *Seet* of a kind of *Heathen Manichees* which held this opinion ; he tells us to prevent that, *ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν τις θεὸς ὁ σκωπτικός*, it was the opinion of the most, and wisest of the *Heathen*. Now these two principles some (saith he) call two opposite Gods, whereof the one is the cause of good, and the other of evil ; him they call *Εὖς*, this *Διούριον*. By this one would imagine that this very ancient *Tradition* was nothing else but the true account of the *Origin* of evil a little disguised. For the *Scripture* making the *Devil* the first author of evil himself, and the first solicitor and tempter of man to it ; who when God directed him straight forward, pull'd man back, and put him quite out of his way, by which means all the miseries of the world came into it : For while man kept close to his Maker, his integrity and obedience were to him what the *vasa umbilicalia* are to the child in the *Womb* ; by them he received whatever tended to his subsistence and comfort : but *sin* cut those vessels asunder, and proved the *Midwife* of misery, bringing man forth into a world of sorrow and sufferings ; Now, I say, the *Scripture* taking such especial notice of one, as the chief of *Devils*, through whose means evil came into the world, this gave occasion to the *Heathens* when length of time had made the original *Tradition* more obscure, to make these two, God and the *Demon*, as two *Anti-gods*, and so to be the causes, the one of all good, and the other of all evil. Which at last came to that (which was the *Devils* great design in thus corrupting the tradition) that both these *Anti-gods* should have solemn worship by *Sacrifices* ; the one by way of *impetration* for bestowing of good, the other by way of *deprecation* for averting of evil. Such *Plutarch* there tells us were the *Oromasdes* and *Arimanius* of *Zoroastres* which were worshipped by the *Persians*, the one for doing good, and the other for avoid-

avoiding evil ; the one they resembled to light, (or fire) the other to *darkness* and *ignorance* ; what animals were good and usefull they ascribed to *Oromasdes*, and all venomous and noxious ones to *Arimanius*, whom *Plutarch* elsewhere calls τὸν πονηρὸν Δαίμονα Πεσοῶν, the evil *Demon* of the *Persians*. The same *Diogenes Laertius* relates of the *Magi*, the *Philosophers* of *Persia*, that they made two distinct principles, Ἀγαθὸν Δαίμονα καὶ κακὸν, a good and bad *Demon* ; for which he quotes *Dion*, *Aristotle*, *Hermippus*, *Eudoxus*, and others. The same *Plutarch* makes to be the opinion of the ancient *Greeks*, who attribute the good to *Jupiter Olympius*, the bad to *Hades* ; the *Chaldeans*, saith he, make the *Planets* their *Gods*, of which two they suppose the cause of good ; two more of only a malignant influence ; and other three to be indifferent to either. The same he affirms of the *Egyptians*, that whatever was evil and irregular, they ascribed to *Typho*, what was good, comely and usefull, they attributed to *Isis* and *Osiris* ; to *Isis* as the passive, *Osiris* as the active principle.

Plut. in Alex.
Diog. Laertius
proem. ad vit.
Philosoph.

Thus we see how large a spread this opinion of the Origin of evil had in the *Gentile* world ; neither did it expire with *Heathenism* ; but *Manes* retained so much of the Religion of his Country being a *Persian*, that he made a strange medley of the *Persian* and *Christian* doctrine together. For that was his famous opinion of which *St. Austin* tells us ; *Iste duo principia inter se diversa atque adversa, eademque aeterna, & coeterna, hoc est, semper fuisse composuit ; duasque naturas atque substantias, boni scilicet & mali, sequens alios antiquos hereticos, opinatus est.* *St. Austin* thinks that *Manes* had his opinion concerning the two principles from the ancient *Hereticks*, by whom I suppose he means the *Marcionists* and *Valentinians* ; but it seems more probable that *Manes* had his doctrine immediatly from his Countrymen, though it be generally thought that *Scythianus* and *Buddas* were his masters in it. But from whomsoever it came, the opinion was merely *Heathen*, and not more contrary to *Scripture* than it is to *reason* ; the former I meddle not with, that opinion being now extinct in the *Christian* world ; I only briefly consider the unreasonableness of it, to shew what a far better

August. de Hæres. c. 46.

account of the *Origine* of evil the *Scriptures* give us, than was discovered by the *Heathen Philosophers*. For on both sides that opinion is repugnant to the *notion* of a *Deity*, so that while they would make *two* such *Gods*, they make none at all. For how can the principle of good be God, if he hath not *Infinite power*, as well as *goodness*? and how can he have *Infinite power*, if he hath not the *management* of things in the world? and how can he have the *management* of things, if they be liable to *evil*, which the other *god* which is the principle of *evil* may lay upon it? from which according to this supposition, the *principle* of good cannot rescue it? So that they who hold this opinion cannot, as *Simplicius* tells us, give God τὴν ἡμπερ τῆς ὀλῆς δύναμιν, *the half of that infinite power* which belongs to him; for neither can he keep the good creatures which he makes from the *power* of the *evil Demon*, and therefore if he loves them, must be in continual *fears* of the *power* of the contrary principle; neither can he free them from the *evil* which the other lays upon them; for then *Gods* power would be far greater than the *evil Demons*; and so he could be no *Anti-god*. And on the other side the *notion* or *Idea* of an *Infinite evil Being*, is in its self an *inconsistent Idea*; for it is an *Infinite non-entity*, if we suppose his very *Being* to lie in *being evil*, which is only a *privation* of *goodness*; and besides if he be *Infinitely evil*, he must be *infinitely contrary* to the good Principle; and how can he be *infinitely contrary* which enjoys *several* of the same *perfections*, which the other hath, which are *infinity* of *essence* and *necessity* of *existence*? Now if this Principle of *evil* be absolutely contrary to the other, it must be contrary in all his *perfections*; for whatever is a *perfection*, belongs to that which is *good*; and now if it be contrary in every perfection, *Infinity* of *essence*, and *necessity* of *existence*, being *two*, it must be as contrary as is imaginable to them, by which this *evil Principle* must be *infinitely defective* in *Being* and *existence*, and so it will be an *infinite non-entity* which yet *exists*, which is the height of *contradiction*. Again, if there be such a contrary principle, which is the *cause* of all *evil*, then all *evil* falls out *unavoidably*, and by the *power* of this *Infinitely evil principle*,

ciple, by which means not only all *Religion*, but all *virtue* and *goodness* will be taken out of the world, if this evil principle be *infinite*; and if not *infinite*, no *Anti-god*: and not only so, but all difference of *good* and *evil* will be taken away (and then what need making two such contrary principles to give an account of the *Origin* of evil?) for when once *evil* becomes thus *necessary*, it loseth its *nature* as a *moral evil*; for a *moral evil* implies in it a *voluntary breach* of some known *Law*; but how can that *breach* be *voluntary*, which was caused by an *Infinite power* in the most proper way of *efficiency*? And thus if all *freedom* of will be destroyed (as it is necessarily by this supposition) then no *Government* of the world by *Laws* can be supposed, and consequently no *reward* or *punishment*, which suppose *liberty* of action, and by this means all *Religion*, *Laws*, and *Providence* are banished out of the world, and so this evil *Demon* will get all into his own hands, and instead of two contrary principles, there will be but one *infinitely evil Demon*. Which that there is not, appears by this, that notwithstanding all the *evil* in the world, there is so much *good* left in it, of which there would be none, if this evil *Demon* had *Infinite power*. By this we see there cannot be a principle infinitely evil; for while they go about to make two such *contrary principles* infinite, they make *neither* of them so, and so while they make two *Gods*, they take away any at all. So that this opinion of the *Origin* of *evil*, is manifestly *absurd*, *irrational*, and *contradictions*.

But all the *Heathen Philosophers* were not so *gross* as to *Seçt. 11.* imagine two such *Anti-gods* with infinitely active power; but yet those who would not in terms assert it, might be driven to it by the *consequence* of their opinion concerning the *Origin* of *evil*, which did suppose a *necessity* of it in nature, as flowing from that *passive principle* out of which the world was produced. Hence it was that *Heracritus* as *Plu-* De *Isid. & Or-* rarch tells us attributed the *Origin* of all things to *dis-* *siride.* cord and *antipathy*, and was wont to say, that when *Homer* wished

ἐκ τε θεῶν ἔσθ' ἐκ τ' αἰθέων ἀπολάττει.

that

that all contention were banished out of the world, that he did secretly curse the Origin of things, and wished the ruine of the world. So Empedocles called the active principle which did good, *Harmony* and *Friendship*, but the other

Νῆκε δ' ἐλόμενον καὶ δῆριν αἵματόεσσαν.

by which he makes it to be a quarrelsome, pernicious, and bloody principle. The same Plutarch tells us of those two renowned Philosophers, Pythagoras and Plato. Thence he tells us the Pythagoreans called the principle of good, τὸ ἐν, πεπερασμένον, τὸ μέγαν τὸ εὐδύ, τὸ φαιστόν, τὸ τετραγώνον, τὸ δεξιόν, τὸ λαμπρόν. *Unity, finite, quiescent, straight, uneven number, square, right and splendid*; the principle of evil, they called πῶς οὐδὲν, τὸ ἀπειρον, τὸ φερόμενον, τὸ καμπύλον, τὸ ἄρπον, τὸ ἐτερόμηνες, τὸ ἀνισόν, τὸ ἀριστερόν, τὸ σκοτεινόν. *The Binary, Infinite, moving, crooked, even, long of one side, unequal, left, obscure*. The opinion of Plato he tells us is very obscure, it being his purpose to conceal it; but he saith in his old age in his book de Legibus, εἰ δὲ αἰνίσκων, εἰ δὲ συμβολικῶς, without any if's or and's, he asserts the world to be moved by more than one principle, by two at the least, πῶς μὲν ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ, καὶ ἡ ἐναντία ταύτῃ, καὶ ἡ ἐναντίαν δημιουργόν. *The one of a good and benign nature, the other contrary to it both in its nature and operations*. Numenius in Chalcidius thus delivers the opinions of Pythagoras and Plato de originibus as he speaks; Igitur Pythagoras quoque, inquit Numenius, fluidam, & sine qualitate sylvam esse censet; nec tamen ut Stoici naturæ media, interque malorum bonorumque viciniam, sed plane noxiam; Deum quippe esse (ut etiam Platoni videtur) initium & causam bonorum, sylvam malorum: so that according to Numenius, both Plato and Pythagoras attributed the origine of evil to the malignity of matter, and so they make evils to be necessarily consequent upon the Being of things. For thus he delivers expressly the opinion of Pythagoras; qui ait, existente providentia, mala quoque necessario substituisse, propterea quod sylvæ sit, & eadem sit malitia prædita: Platonemque idem Numenius laudat, quod duas mundi animas autemet. Unam beneficentissimam; malignam alteram, sc. Sylvam. Igitur juxta Platonem

Chalcid. in
Time. p. 394.

ronem mundo bona sua Dei, tanquam Patris liberalitate collata De Anima
sunt; mala vero, matris sylva vitio cohaeserunt. But Plu-
arch will by no means admit, that Plato attributes the De Animæ
procreat. c.
Time.
Origine of evil meerly to matter, but he makes the principle
of evil to be something distinct from matter, which he calls
τὸ ἀτακτικόν, καὶ ἀόριστον, αὐτοκίνητον ὃ καὶ κινητικὸν ἀεὶ ἔχει, a confused
infinite, self-moving, stirring principle; which (saith he)
he elsewhere calls Necessity, and in his *de Legibus* plainly,
ψυχὴν ἀτακτικὴν καὶ κακοποιεῖσαν, a disorderly and malignant Soul,
which cannot be understood of meer matter, when he makes
his Hyle αἰοροῦσαν καὶ ἀχηματιστοῦ καὶ πόσης πύοτις καὶ δυνάμεως οὐ ἐχού-
σαν, Without form or figure, and destitute of all qualities
and power of operation: and it is impossible (saith he) that that
which is of it self such an inert principle as matter is, should
by Plato be supposed to be the cause and principle of evil, which
he elsewhere calls ἀνάγκη πολλὰ πρὸ θεῶ δουραμένη καὶ ἀφωλευ-
ζουσα, Necessity which often resisted God and cast off his reins.
So that according to Plutarch, Plato acquits both God and
Hyle from being the Origine of evil, τὴν γὰρ ὕλην διαφορᾶς ἀπά-
σης ἀπαλλοτρίων, καὶ τὴν θεὸν τὴν κακῶν αἰτίαν ἀπορρίπτει τιθεμένη,
and therefore attributes it to that malignant spirit which
moves the matter, and is the cause of all the disorderly mo-
tions in the World. But what this spirit should be, neither
he nor any one else could ever understand; what darkness
and ignorance then was there among the wisest of Philoso-
phers concerning the Origine of evil, when they were so
confused and obscure in the account which they gave of it,
that their greatest admirers could not understand them!

But though Plato seemed so ambiguous in his judgement
of the Origine of evil, whether he should attribute it to the Sect. 12.
Hyle, or some malignant spirit in it, the Stoicks were more
dogmatical, and plainly imputed the cause of evil to the per-
versity of matter. So Chalcidius tells us, that the Stoicks
made matter not to be evil in it self as Pythagoras, but that
it was indifferent to either; *perrogati igitur unde mala?*
perversitatem seminarium malorum causati sunt: they made
the perversity of matter the Origine of evil; but as he well
observes, *nec expediunt adhuc unde ipsa perversitas, cum juxta*
ipso duo sint initia rerum, Deus & sylva. Deus summum &
Chalcid. in
Tim. p. 395.

præcellens bonum ; sylvæ, ut censent, nec bonum nec malum.

They give no rational account whence this perversity of matter should arise, when according to the *Stoicks*, there are but two *principles* of things, *God* and *matter*, whereof the one is perfectly good, the other neither good nor evil. But this perversity they tell us is something necessarily consequent upon the generation of things. *Ἰαυτα γὰρ ἐστὶ παρὰ τὰ τῆ γενέσεως ἀνεπηχυνόα, ἀσώτῃς ἢ τῷ κακῷ, καὶ ὁ βυτὶς τῷ σώματι,*

these are affections (viz. the disorders in the world) which follow the Generation of things, as rust comes upon brass, and filth upon the body, as the counterfeit Trismegistus speaks; so

Max. Tyrius

Serm. 25.

Seneca de

Provid. c. 5.

Maximus Tyrius saith that evils in the world are *οὐ τέχνης ἔργα, ἀλλ' ὕλης πάθος*, not any works of art, but the affections of matter. *Non potest artifex mutare materiam*, saith *Seneca*,

when he is giving an account why *God* suffers evils in the world : and elsewhere gives this account why evils came into

Præf. ad nat.

ur. quæst.

the World, *non quia cessat ars, sed quia id in quo exercetur inobsequens arti est.* So that the origine of evil by this account of it lies wholly upon the perversity of matter, which it seems was incapable of being put into better order by that *God* who produced the world out of that matter which the *Stoicks* supposed to be eternal. And the truth is, the avoiding the attributing the cause of evil to *God*, seems to have been the great reason, why they rather chose to make it matter necessary and co-existent with *God*, and this was the only plausible pretence which *Hermogenes* had for following the *Platonists* and *Stoicks* in this opinion, that he might set *God* far enough off from being the *Author of sin* ; but I cannot see what advantage comes at all by this *Hypothesis*, but it is chargeable with as many difficulties as any other. For,

1.

1. It either destroys *Gods* omnipotency, or else makes him the approver of evil, so that if he be not auctor, he must be

Tertul. adv.

Hermog. c. 10.

assentator mali, as *Tertullian* speaks against *Hermogenes*, because he suffered evil to be in matter ; for, as he argues, *aut enim potuit emendare sed noluit ; aut voluit quidem, verum non potuit infirmus Deus ; si potuit & noluit, malus & ipse, quia malo favit ; & sic jam habetur ejus, licet non instituerit, quia tamen si noluisset illud esse, non esset ; ipse jam fecit esse, quod noluit non esse : quo quid est turpius ? si voluit esse quod ipse*

noluit :

noluit fecisse, adversum semetipsum egit, cum & voluit esse quod noluit fecisse, & noluit fecisse quod voluit esse. So that little advantage is gained for the clearing the true *origin of evil* by this opinion; for either *God* could have taken away evil out of *matter* but would not, or else would but could not; this latter destroys *Gods Omnipotency*, the former his *Goodness*; for by that means *evil* is in the world by his consent and approbation; for if *God* would not remove it when he might, the *Being* of it will come from him; when if he would have hindered it, it would not have been, and so *God* by not rooting out of evil, will be found an assertor of it; *male si per voluntatem; turpiter si per necessitatem, aut famulus erit mali Deus, aut amicus*; if *Gods will* were the cause why sin was, it reflects on his *goodness*, if *Gods power* could not hinder it, it destroys his *omnipotency*. So that by this opinion *God* must either be a slave or a friend to evil. 2. This principle overturns the foundations of Religion, and all transactions between *God* and mens souls in order to their welfare, because it makes evil to be necessarily existent in the World; which appears from hence, in that *evil* doth result from the *Being of matter*, and so it must necessarily be, as *matter* is supposed to be; for whatever results from the *Being* of a thing, must be co-existent with it; and so what flows from what doth necessarily exist, must have the same mode of existence which the *Being* it self hath; as is evident in all the attributes of *God*, which have the same immutability with his nature: now then, if *evil* did exist from eternity together with *matter*, it must necessarily exist as *matter* doth, and so *evil* will be invincible and unavoidable in the World; which if once granted, renders Religion uselefs, makes *Gods commands* unrighteous, and destroys the foundations of *Gods proceedings* in the day of Judgment. 3. This opinion makes *God* not to be the Author of good, while it denies him to be the Author of evil. For either there was nothing else but *evil* in this eternal matter, or there was a mixture of good and evil; if nothing else but *evil* which did necessarily exist, it were as impossible for *God* to produce good out of it, as to annihilate the necessarily existent matter. If there were a mixture of good and evil, they were both there either necessarily or contin-

2.

3.

gently; how could either of them be *contingently* in that which is supposed to be *necessarily existent*, and *no free agent*? If they be both there necessarily, 1. It is hard conceiving how two such contrary things as *good* and *evil*, should both necessarily be in the same *uniform* matter. 2. Then *God* is no more the author of *good* than of *evil* in the World; for he is said not to be the Author of *evil* because it comes from *matter*; and so it appears *good* doth too, and so *God* according to this opinion, is no more the Author of *good*, than he is of *evil*. But if it be said that *good* is not in *matter*, but *God* produced that out of nothing: Then I reply, 1. If *God* did produce *good* out of nothing, why did he not produce *matter* out of nothing too? if he were so powerfull as to do the one, there could be no defect of power as to the other. What insufficiency is there in *Gods* nature for producing all things out of nothing, if he can produce any thing out of nothing? 2. If *God* did produce *good* out of *evil*, why could he not have removed all *evil* out of *matter*? for *good* could not be produced, but by the removing of some *evil* which was before that *good*, and so *God* might have removed all *evil* out of *matter*. And so by not doing it when he might, this opinion gives not the least satisfaction in point of reason for acquitting *God* from being the Author of *sin*, nor for clearing the true *origine* of *evil*.

Sect. 13.

Thus we have now compared the account given of it in *Scripture*, with that given by the *Heathen Philosophers*, and find it in every thing more clear, rational and satisfactory than theirs is. Which doubtless is the reason, why the more modern *Philosophers*, such as *Hierocles*, *Porphyrie*, *Simplicius* and others, though otherwise great opposers of *Christianity*, did yet in this side with the *Scriptures*, and attribute the *original* of *evil* not to *matter* but to the *Will* of *man*. And whoever is seriously conversant with the writings of those *Philosophers*, who were ἐκ τῆς ἑκκλησίας of the sacred succession, out of the School of *Ammonius* at *Alexandria*, such as *Plotinus*, *Porphyrius*, *Jamblichus* and *Hierocles*, will find them write in an higher strain concerning many weighty and important truths, as of the degeneracy of mens souls from *God*, and the way of the souls returning to him,

him, than the most sublime of the ancient Philosophers had done. Which speculations of theirs no doubt arose not so much from the school of Plato, and Pythagoras, as of that great restorer of Philosophy Ammonius of Alexandria; whose Scholars Herennius, Origen and Plotinus were. Who living and dying a Christian, as Eusebius and Hierom assure us, whatsoever Porphyrius suggests to the contrary, did communicate to his Scholars the sublimer mysteries of *Divine Revelation*, together with the speculations of the ancient Philosophers: which Holstenius conceives he did with an adjuration of *secresie*, which he tells us Porphyrius himself acknowledgeth, that those three Scholars of Ammonius, Herennius, Origen and Plotinus, were under an obligation to each other not to reveal and discover, though it were after violated by them. It is an easie matter to conceive what an excellent improvement might be made of the ancient Platonick Philosophy by the advantage of the Scriptures, by one who was so well versed in both of them as Ammonius is supposed to have been; and how agreeable and becoming would that Philosophy seem which had only its rise from Plato, but its height and improvement from those rich and truly divine Truths which were inlaid with them? The want of observing this, viz. whence it was that those excellent discourses of the latter Platonists had their true original, hath given occasion to several mistakes among learned men: as first the over-valuing of the Platonick Philosophy, as though in many of the discourses and notions of it, it seemed to some (who were more in love with Philosophy than the Scriptures) to out-go what is discovered therein concerning the same things. A most groundless and unworthy censure! when it is more than probable (and might be largely manifested, were it here a fit opportunity) that whatever is truly generous and noble in the sublimest discourses of the Platonists, had not only its primitive rise, but its accession and improvement from the Scriptures wherein it is still contained in its native lustre and beauty, without those paintings and impure mixtures which the sublimest Truths are corrupted with in the Platonick Writings. The reason of which is, though these Philosophers grew suddenly rich through the

Euseb. Eccles.
hist. l. 6. c. 19.
Hieron. de
Script. Eccl.
De vit. &
Script. Porph.
c. 6.

spoils they had taken out of the Scriptures, yet they were loth to be known, from whence they had them, and would seem to have had that out of their own gardens which was only transplanted from the *Sacred writings*. Therefore we find them not mentioning the *Scriptures* and the *Christian doctrine* without some contempt of its *meannefs* and simplicity; & whatever improvement they had gained by them, they would have it less taken notice of by professing their *opposition* to the *Christians*, as is notorious in those great *Philosophers*, *Porphyrius*, *Jamblichus*, *Hierocles*, *Simplicius* and others. It being their design to take so much and no more out of the *Christian Doctrine* as they could well suit with their *Platonick notions*, by which means they so disguised the *faces* of the *Truths* they stole, that it were hard for the right owners of them to know them again. Which was the grand artifice of their great Master *Plato*, who doubtless by means of his abode and acquaintance in *Egypt* about the time when the *Jews* began to flock thither, had more certain knowledge of many *truths* of grand importance, concerning the *Deity*, the *Nature* of the *soul*, the *Origine* of the *world*, than many other *Greek Philosophers* had; but yet therein lay his great fault, that he wrapt up and disguised his notions in such a *fabulous* and ambiguous manner, that partly it might be less known from whence he had them, and that they might find better entertainment among the *Greeks*, than they were ever like to do in their plain and native dress. Which *Plato* himself seems somewhere to intimate, when he saith, that what the *Greeks* received from the *Barbarians*, καλλιον τωτο εις τιλας ἀπεργάζοντο, they put it into a better fashion, i. e. they disguise it, alter and change it as they please, and put it into a *Greek habit*, that it might never be suspected to have been a *Forraigner*. Thence *Tertullian* speaks with a great deal of truth and freedom of such *Philosophers* who did ingenii sitim de prophetarum fonte irrigare (as he expresseth it) that quenched their thirst after knowledge with the waters of *Jordan* (though they did not like *Naaman*, cure the leprosie of the head by washing in them) for as *Tertullian* saith, they came only *ex negotio curiositatis*, more to please the itch of their curiosity than to cure it.

Plato in Epi-
nom.

Apol. c. 47.

And

And wherein they seemed most to agree with the Scriptures, their difference was beyond their agreement. *Siquidem vera quæque & consonantia Prophetis aut aliunde commendant, aut aliorum subornant, cum maxima injuria veritatis quam efficiunt aut adjuvari falsis aut patrocinari.* Tertul de A-
nima. c. 2. Whatever the Philosophers speak agreeable to the Scriptures, either they do not own whence they had it, or turn it quite another way, whereby they have done the truth a great deal of injury, by mixing it with their corruptions of it, and making that little truth a plea for the rest of their errors. Neither was this only among the ancient Philosophers, but the Primitive Christians began to discern the under-hand workings of such who sought to blend Philosophy and Christianity together; for *Tertullian* himself takes great notice of such, who did *Veritatis dogmata ad philosophicas Sententias adulterare*, suborn Christianity to maintain Philosophy; which makes him cry out, *Viderint qui Stoicum & Platicum, & Dia-* De Proscript.
advers. hæret. *lecticum Christianismum protulerunt*; by which we see what tampering there was betimes rather to bring Christianity down to Philosophy, than to make Philosophy truckle under the truth and simplicity of the Scriptures. Whether *Ammonius* himself, and some others of the School of *Alexandria*, might be guilty in this kind, is not here a place to enquire, though it be too evident in the Writings of some, that they rather seek to accommodate the Scriptures to the Sentiments of the School of *Plato*, than to reform that by the Scriptures; but I say, however it were with those who were Christians, yet those who were not, but only Philosophers, made their great advantage by it. For when they found what was reconcileable with the Doctrine of *Plato* in the Scriptures done already to their hands, by the endeavours chiefly of *Ammonius* and *Origen*, they greedily embrace those improvements of their Philosophy, which would tend so much to the credit of it, and as contemptuously reject what they found irreconcilable with the dictates of their Philosophy. Now what an unreasonable thing is it, when whatever was noble and excellent in the Heathen Philosophy was derivative from the Scriptures, as the sacred Fountain of it, that the meeting with such things should in the

the least redound to the *prejudice* of the *Scriptures* from whence it was originally derived? when on the other side it should be a great *confirmation* to our *faith* as to the *Scriptures*, that they who were professed *Philosophers* and *admirers* only of *reason*, did so readily embrace some of those grand *Truths* which are contained in the *Word* of *God*.

Sect. 14.

For which we need no other *instance*, than that before us, concerning the *Origine* of *evil*, the making out of which will tend to the clearing the *last* thing mentioned concerning it, which was, that the *most material things* in it are *attested* by the *Heathens* themselves. And this *honey* which is gained out of the *Lyons* mouth, must needs *taste* sweeter than any other doth. For it is a weak and groundless *mistake* on the other side, which is the *second* (which ariseth from meeting things consonant to the *Scriptures* in the *Writings* of *Philosophers*) presently to conclude from such things that they were *Christians* (as it is said some have lately done in the behalf of *Hierocles*.) For there being such clear accounts given in *Scripture* of the grand *difficulties* and *perplexities* which the minds of men were troubled with, when these came to the knowledge of such who were of *Philosophick* and *inquisitive* heads, we cannot but think they would meet with *acceptation* among them, especially if they might be made consistent with their former *speculations*. Thus it was in our present case concerning the *Origine* of *evil*, we have already beheld the lamentable *perplexities* the ancient *Philosophers* were in about it, what *Meanders* they were lost in for want of a *clue* to guide them through them; now it pleased *God* after the coming of *Christ* in the *flesh* to declare to the world the only way for the recovery of *souls* and their *eternal salvation*, the *news* of which being spread so far that it soon got among the *Philosophers*, could not but make them more *inquisitive* concerning the *state* and *condition* of their *souls*, and when they had searched what the *Philosophers* had formerly discovered of it, their *curiosity* would presently prompt them to see what account of things concerning the *souls* of *men* was delivered by the preachers of this *New doctrine*. By this they could not but presently under-

understand that they declared all mens souls to be in a most degenerate and low *condition*, by being so continually under the power of the most unreasonable and unruly passions, that they were estranged from *God*, and prone to fix on things very unsuitable to their nature, as to all which, their own inward sense and experience could not but tell them that these things were notoriously true; and therefore, they enquire further how these things came to be so; which they receive a full *account* of in Scripture, that mans *soul* was at first created *pure* and *holy*, and in perfect *friendship* with *God*, that *God* dealt bountifully and favourably with man; only expected *obedience* to his *Laws*; that man being a *free agent*, did abuse his *liberty*, and *disobeyed* his *Maker*; and thence came the true *παραπτώσις*, the *feathers* of the *soul* whereby it soared up to Heaven, *moulted* away, and the *soul* sunk below its self into a *degenerate* and *apostate condition*, out of which it is impossible to be recovered without some *extraordinary expression* of *Divine Favour*. Now what is there in all this account, but what is hugely suitable to *principles* of *reason*, and to the general *experience* of the *world*, as to those things which were capable of being tried by it? And those *Philosophers*, who were any thing in *ennous*, and lovers of *truth*, could not but confess the *truth* of those things which we are now speaking of, *viz.* *That mens souls are in a very degenerate condition. That the most rational account of it is, that man by the act of his own will brought himself into it; and that in order to the happiness of mens souls, there was a necessity of recovery out of this condition.*

As to the *degeneracy* of the *souls* of *men*; This was the common complaint of those *Philosophers*, who minded the government of themselves, and the practice of *vertue*, especially of the *Platonists* and *Stoicks*. *Seneca* in all his moral Discourses, especially in his *Epistles*, may speak sufficiently in behalf of the *Stoicks* how much they lamented the degeneracy of the world. And the *Platonists* all complain of the *slavery* of the *soul* in the body, and that it is here by way of *punishment*, for something which was done before; which makes me somewhat inclinable to think, that *Plato* knew more of the *lapse* of *mankind*, than he would openly discover;

Sect. 15.
1.

discover ; and for that end disguised it after his usual manner in that *hypothesis of præ-existence*, which taking it *Cabbalistically* (for I rather think the opinion of *præ-existence* is so to be taken, than the *history of the Fall of man*) may import only this, *That mens souls might be justly supposed to be created happy, but by reason of the Apostasie of mans soul from God, all souls now come into their bodies as into a kind of prison, they being enslaved to the brutish part within them, there having been such a true Angopponon, the soul being now deprived of her chiefest perfections in this her low and degenerate condition.* And it seems far more rational to me to interpret those persons opinions to a *Cabbalistical*, or an *Allegorical* sense, who are known to have designedly writ in a way obscure and ambiguous, than to force those mens expressions to *Cabbala's*, who profess to write a plain *History*, and that with the greatest simplicity and perspicuity. But it cannot but seem very strange that an *hypothesis* capable of being reconciled to the plain literal sense of the *Scriptures* (delivered by a person who useth great artifice and cunning to disguise his opinions, and such a person withall, who (by such persons themselves who make use of this opinion to that end) is supposed to have been very conversant with the writings of *Moses*) should be taken in its literal sense, as it really imports *præ-existence* of each particular soul in the grossest manner ; and this should be made to be a part of the *Philosophick Cabbala* of the writings of such a person, who useth not the least artifice to disguise his sense, nor gives us any where the least intimation that he left behind him such plaited pictures in his *History of the beginning of the world*, that if you look straight forward, you may see a literal *Cabbala*, on the one side a *Philosophical*, and on the other a *Moral*. But now if we remove the *Cabbala* from *Moses* to *Plato*, we may find no incongruity or repugnancy at all either as to *Plato* his way of writing, or the consonancy of the opinion so interpreted to the plain genuine sense of *Moses*, if by *Plato* his opinion of the *præ-existence* and descent of souls, be understood by the former the happy state of the soul of man in conjunction with God, and by the latter, the low and degenerate condition which the soul is in, after *Apostasie*

postasie from him, which the latter *Platonists* are so large & eloquent in expressing. *Porphyry* where he speaks of some things he counsels men to do, hath these words, *But if we cannot do them, let us at least do that which was so much lamented of old,* τὸ θρηνηόμενον πρὸς τοῖς παλαιῶν, which is ὡς τοῖων ἕκ τ' ἐρίδων, ἕκ τε νεκρίων γινόμεθα, ὅπ τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἀκήρατον, καὶ De Abstinent. ἐν πάντων ἀλλήλοῖς σάξιν ἐδυνάμεθα. *Let us at the least joyn with* lib. 3. sect. 27. *our Fore-fathers in lamenting this, that we are compounded of such disagreeing and contrary principles, that we are not able to preserve divine, pure and unspotted innocency. And Hierocles fully expresseth his sense of the degeneracy of man-* Hierocles in Pythag. Carm. p. 261. *kind, in these words: οἱ γὰρ πλείους κακοὶ καὶ τῆς σωφροσύνης ἥτης, καὶ φρενελαβῆς ὑπὸ τῆς εἰς γῆν νεύσεως γινόμενοι, ὡς καὶ τὸ τοῦ παρ' ἐ-* αὐτῶν τὸ κακὸν ἔχειν, διὰ τὸ βλαβηθῆναι φύσιν ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, καὶ συμπερίσσει αὐτοὺς τῆς τότε ὁμιλίας, ἥς ἐυτύχων ἐν αὐγῇ καθαρῇ διαύροντες. ὅ γὰρ ἀπὸ Θεοῦ χάρισμα βλάπτονται τὰς φρένας ἢ πρὸς γῆν νεύσι δηλοῖ. *The most of men in the world are bad, and under the command of their passions, and grown impotent through their propensity to earth; which great evil they have brought upon themselves, by their wilfull Apostasie from God, and withdrawing themselves from that society with him which they once enjoyed in pure light: which departure of mens souls from God, which is so hurtfull to the minds of men, is evident by their strong inclination to the things of this world. The same Author mentions with much approbation that speech of Heraclitus speaking of those souls which are ἀπώτοι εἰς καλὴν, which I cannot better render, than undeclinably good, he saith, ὅπ ζῶμεν τὸν ἐμῶν θάνατον, τεθνήκαμεν ὃ τὸν ἐμῶν βίον. We live their death, and die their life: κατεῖσι γὰρ καὶ συμπίπτει τῆς εὐδαίμονος χάρας ὁ ἀνθρωπίνος. For man is now fallen down from that blessed Region, and as Empedocles the Pythagorean speaks,*

Φυγὰς θεόθεν καὶ ἀλήτης
Νέκει μωνομήνῳ πῶσαν.

Which words cannot be better rendred, than in the words the Scripture useth concerning *Cain*, and he went from the presence of the Lord, and was a fugitive in the earth, and under continual perplexities. For the soul of man ha-

Hierocles in c.
Pythag.
p. 254.

ving left τὴν λευκὴν καὶ ἀνδρείαν (it is *Hierocles* his own expression) the pleasant meadow of truth (a fit description of *Paradise*) τῇ ὁσμῇ δὲ περισφύσσας εἰς γῆν οὐ ἔρχεται σῶμα, ἀλλ' οὕτως ἀμύνειται ἀμυνθεῖς. Through the violence of her moulting, or deplumation, she comes into this earthly body, deprived of that blessed life, which she before enjoyed. Which he tells us is very consonant to *Plato's* sense of the ἀνάθεσις, or descent of souls, that when by reason of their impotency of fixing wholly on God they suffer συντυχίαν καὶ περισφύσιν some great loss ; and a deprivation of former perfections (which I suppose is meant by the περισφύσιν, the souls impotency of flying up above this earthly world) then they lapse into these terrestrial and mortal bodies. So *Hierocles* concludes with this excellent and Divine speech, ὡς περὶ ἐν ἡ δόξῃ ἐν γῇ, καὶ ἡ περισφύσιν ἡμῶν ὡς περὶ τὰ ἀνὰ εἰς τὴν τῶν θνῆτων ἐνεργεῖα τῶν, οἷς τὰ κακὰ συνέρχεται. ὅπως ἐν ἡ τῆς θνῆτος προσπαθείας ἀποβολῇ, καὶ ἡ τῶν ἀρετῶν, ὅς περὶ πνεῶν ἐκφυγῇ πρὸς τὴν τῶν καλῶν καὶ ἀνὰ τῶν, εἰς τὴν δόξαν εὐζωίαν ἡμῶν ἀνάξει. As therefore by apostasy from God, and the moulting of those feathers of our souls, whereby we may be raised up above this world, we have fallen into this place of mortals which is compassed about with evils : So by the casting off carnal affections, and by the growth of virtues like new feathers to the soul, we shall ascend to the place of pure and perfect good, and to the enjoyment of a divine life. So much more becoming *Christians* do these excellent *Philosophers* speak of the degeneracy of mens souls, and the consequents of it, than some who would be accounted the followers of reason, as well as of *Christ*, who make it so much of their business to extenuate the fall of man. Which we find those who were meer *Philosophers*, far more rational and ingenuous in, than those who pretend so highly to reason ; but I think with as little of it as any, supposing the *Scriptures* to be of Divine authority. But it is not here our business to consider the opinions of those who pretend to *Christianity*, but only of such who pretending only to reason, have yet consented with the doctrine of the *Scriptures* as to the degeneracy of the Souls of men, that it lies in an apostasy from God, and having lost those perfections which they had before.

Thae

That mans will is the cause of his Apostasie; this we have Sect. 16. already manifested at large from the testimony and reason of *Simplicius*, and *Hierocles* is as large and clear in it as the other, with expressions much of the same nature. Μὴ γὰρ ἔσσι In aur. Carm. ἡ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐστὶ τῶν τε εἰς νόοντων τὸ δεῖν, καὶ τῶν μηδέποτε νοεῖν περὶ 258. φυσικῶν, ἀνεπὶ πρὸς ἐκείνα, καὶ κατεῖσι πρὸς ταῦτα, γὰρ κηρύττει καὶ Σποβελῆ, πρὸς τὴν δέξαν ὁμοίαν καὶ τὴν δέχειον, διὰ τὸ τὴ φύσεως ὁμοίον ἀναμείβεσθαι αἰετιμῶν. Mans nature lying between those beings which perpetually contemplate God, and those which are incapable of it, it sometimes ascends to those, and sometimes descends to these, according as it observes or rejects the dictates of reason, and so by reason of the indifferency of the will is liable to take upon it the similitude of God or a beast. Ταῦτ' ἐν ὁ τοῖς τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐγνώκως ἐστὶς, εἶδε πῶς αὐθαίρετα πῆματ' ἔχουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, καὶ πῶς Τλήμονες καὶ τάλανες αὐτῶν αἰρέσεις γίνονται. And whoever thoroughly considers this, will easily understand, how men are the causes of their own evils, and become unhappy and miserable through their own choice and self-wills. Which he brings in by way of explication of that truly golden Pythagorean verse,

Γινώσκοντες δὲ ἀνθρώπους αὐθαίρετα πῆματ' ἔχοντες
Τλήμονας.

Men are grown miserable through their own fault. And afterwards *Hierocles* excellently describes the nature of evil in these words, ἦν ὅ συμφορὰς αἶμα καὶ ὁπίστητον ἡμῶν κακόν, ἡ τὴ αὐτεξούσια παρὰ φύσιν κίνησις. Both our natural and contracted pravity, is nothing else but the unnatural motion of our free wills: according to which, saith he, παντὶ τοῖς θεοῖς νόμοις περιόμεθα, ἐδὲν ἐπιπαιδινομένοι οὖν ἐαυτοῖς βλάπτομεν, διὰ τὸ δοκεῖν ἀντιπεῖνεν θεῷ· ἀλλὰ μόνον τὸ πολὺς ὁρᾶντες, ὅτι ἐδυνάμεθα ἀνομιᾶν τῶν ἐκείνου θεοῦ. We dare to contradict the Laws of God, not being sensible how much we injure our selves when we do it; and only look at this, that we are able to cast off the reins of Gods Laws from our necks. And he truly saith, that it is the greatest abuse of liberty to offend God; when we either do what he forbids, or neglect what he requires. ἵνα ἐκατέρωθεν τῆς ἀνομίᾳ ἐαυτοῖς πληρώσωσιν οἱ τὸν θεῶν νόμον ἐκβαίνοντες, πρὸς τὸ μὴ ποιεῖν τὰ προ-
τεταγμένα

εὐτυχία καὶ τὴν πῦρ καὶ ἀμφοτέρωθεν. So that on both sides men bring misery upon themselves, by transgressing the divine Law, both by not doing what they are commanded, and by doing what they are forbidden. So that he fully ascribes the origine of evil to the τὸ ἀκέραιον κίνημα τοῦ ἐν δυνάμει, as he calls it, the irregular motion of the will of man, which we have already shewed to be the doctrine of the Scriptures.

3.

Aug. de Ci-
vit. Dei. l. 10.
c. 32.

As to the necessity of the souls recovery from this condition in order to her felicity, we have these Philosophers expressing their consent with the Scriptures ; Porphyrus as St. *Augustine* tells us in the end of his first Book de Regressu Anima, doth acknowledge the necessity of a way of recovering souls, which should be universal. Cum autem dicit Porphyrus, nondum receptam unam quandam sectam, quae universalem viam animæ contineat liberanda, — nondumque in suam notitiam eandem viam historiali cognitione perlatam, proculdubio confitetur esse aliquam, sed nondum in suam venisse notitiam. But the necessity of the purgation of the soul in order to its felicity, is so largely and fully discoursed of by all the Platonists, and Pythagoreans, that it will be needless to insist upon it. Thus far then we find the account given of the origine of evil in Scripture to be embraced by the sublimest of the Heathen Philosophers, as most rational and satisfactory ; which was the thing to be proved.

Sect. 17.

Neither do we find only the main of this account acknowledged as rational, but we may trace some not obscure footsteps of the truth of the particular circumstances which concern the fall of man, among the Heathens : such as the Devils envying of mans happiness, his disguising himself under the form of a Serpent, and mans being thrown out of Paradise upon his fall.

D. Casaubon.
Original of
temporal
evils.

1. The devils envying the Happiness of man. It hath been truly observed by a learned man, that the original of that very ancient opinion among the Heathen, de invidia demonis, had its rise from the history of the fall of man, which he hath made out so fully, that I shall the less need to prove it. And that there was an undoubted tradition of some malignant spirits, which envied the welfare of mankind, appears by that ample Testimony of Plutarch in his Dio mentioned by the

the same Author ; ἢ κ' οἶδεν, μὴ τῶν παύ παλαιῶν τῶν ἀτοπώτατον ἀναγκαζομένων προσδίδχθαι λόγον, ὡς τὰ φαντασμάτια καὶ βίσιονα, προσφθονῶντα τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσιν καὶ ᾗ προσξίσιν ἐπισύμενα, πύραυλοι καὶ φόβοι ἐπάγει, σέοντι καὶ σεάλλοντα τῷ ὁρετῇ ὡς μὴ διαμύσαντες ἀπώτες ἐν τῷ καλῷ καὶ ἀκέραιον, βελτίον ἐκένον υἱόσας μὲ τὴν τελειὴν τῷ ὡπιν. Plutarch was much troubled to give an account of the apparitions which Brutus and Dio, who were learned and Philosophical men, were haunted withall ; and doubts he can give no just account of it, unless he embraced that very ancient tradition (which yet seemed absurd and incredible,) viz. that there are certain wicked and malignant Demons, which envy good men, and withstand their enterprises, by raising fears and troubles to them, that so they might hinder them in their pursuit of vertue; lest if they continue steadfast and unmoveable in good, they should be at last partakers of greater felicity than they enjoy. There being then so antient a tradition of such ὕβρις καὶ δαίμονες (as the learned man mentioned hath more fully shewed in his notes on this place of Plutarch,) gives a great confirmation to the truth of what the Scripture reports concerning the Devils being so great an Instrument in procuring the fall of man. To him therefore I refer the inquisitive reader, and shall not add to the Testimonies of him cited, that of Xenocrates in Plutarch, de Iside & Osiride, where he saith that the calamities of life and misfortunes men meet with, do not agree with that veneration which we have for the Deity, and good spirits, ἀλλ' ἔτι φύσεις ἐν τῷ πελάγοντι μεγάλας καὶ ἰσχυράς, δυσέριπες καὶ σκυθρωπὰς ἐνχαίρειν τοῖς τοιούτοις. But that there are in the air some great and potent Beings, which are of a surly and malignant nature, and rejoyce to do men all the mischief they can. Jamblichus in his answer to Porphyrius concerning the Egyptian Mysteries, undertakes to give an account of these evil spirits or Demons, and that from them the Origine of evil in the world is ; for thus he speaks (as he is translated by Ficinus) Si verum est quod de Idolis dicebamus, improbisque Demonibus, hinc sane exoritur multiplex origo malorum. Simulant enim Deorum presentiam, demonumque bonorum, ideoque cultorem suum jubent esse justum, ut ipsi videantur boni, sicut & Dii ; quoniam vero natura sunt

Plutarc. de I-
sid. & Osir. p.

361.

Jamblichus
de myst. p. 105

(sunt

sunt mali, rogati mala inferre, libenter inferunt, atque nobis ad injusta conducunt. Hi sunt omnino qui & in oraculis mentiuntur & fallunt, & turpia consulunt atque peragunt. By which we see he acknowledgeth some spirits whose *natures* are *wicked*, and help men to do evil; and that these very *spirits* may sometimes command that which is *good*, lest they should be suspected, to be what they are, of a wicked and malignant nature, which only design the *ruine* of men. By which we have a good account of what-ever was commendable delivered by the *Heathen oracles*, which yet might come from the *Devil* still, by this confession of *Jamblicus* himself.

Sect. 18.

2.

Orig. c. Cels.
lib. 6.

For the Devils appearing under the form of a *Serpent*, It is very probably conjectured, that from hence it was that the *Prince* of those who contended with *Saturn*, was by that ænigmatical writer *Pherecydes* *Cyrius* called *Οριονδης*. *Celsus* who had so little skill in antiquity as to think that the *history* of *Moses* was as to many passages of it taken out of *Heathen Fables*, insists on this very story of *Ophioneus* as the groundwork of that relation in *Genesis* concerning the *Fall*. But *Origen* well answers him, ὅρα ἔν, εἰ ὑπερλάττωσιν ὡς σφαλλομένοις ἀπεβέβηκα, καὶ ἀποπεπλανημένοις θεῶν αἰνιγματῶν, αὐτὶς σαφῶς σφάλει; μὴ κατανόησας ὅτι τὰ πολλὰ ἐμόνον Ἑρακλείτου καὶ Φερεκύδου ἀρχαιότερα, ἢ καὶ Ὅμηρου, Μωϋσέως ῥαύμαλα εἰσήγαγε τὸν ὅρι πενήν τετα καὶ ἐκπτόν τε τῶν ἑραινῶν λόγον. See therefore if this rare *Antiquary* who chargeth us with impiety in corrupting and altering the *Heathen Fables*, be not himself more justly chargeable with the same fault, not understanding the far greater antiquity of the writings of *Moses*, than either of *Heraclitus*, or *Pherecydes*, or *Homer* himself, which reports the story of that evil one which fell from *Heaven*. ὁ γὰρ ὅρις (παρ' ὃν ὡς τὰ Φερεκύδου χρόνον Ὁριονδῆς) αἰτίῃ γινώσκου τοῦ ἐκβληθῆαι τὸ θεῖον ὡς εἰσεῖσε τὸν ἀνθρώπον, πιαυτὰ τινα αἰνίσσεται, ἐπαγγελίᾳ δεότητι καὶ μεζόνων ἀπατήσας τὸ διηλύτερον γένος· ὡς σωμακολεθικῶν λέγεται καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ. For the *Serpent* (from which *Ophioneus* in *Pherecydes* derived his name) which was the cause why man was cast forth of *Paradise*, doth intimate some such thing, while under a pretence of *Divinity*, and of a better condition, he first deceived the woman, and by her means the man. *Celins Rhodiginus* calls this

this *Ophioneus* *Demonicum Serpentem*, qui antesignannus fuerit agminis à Divina mentis placito deficientis. This *Pherecydes*, as appears by *Eusebius*, had much converse with the *Phœnicians*; where he purposely speaks concerning this *Ophioneus*. Now the *Phœnicians*, as *Eusebius* likewise tells us, worshipped their God under the Form of a Serpent; which probably might be occasioned by the Devil's ambition and Tyranny over men, that he would be worshipped among them in that very Form wherein he had done so much mischief to the world. It was very early in the world, when the *Phœnicians* and *Egyptians* did begin to adore their Gods under the Form of Serpents, for the beginning of it is attributed to *Taautus* by *Eusebius*, ἡ μὲν ἐν τῷ Δεσμῶντι οὖσαν καὶ τῷ ὄρει αὐτῆς ἐξεδείχθη ὁ Τάαυτος καὶ μετ' αὐτὴν αὐτῆς Φοίνικες τε καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι. Neither was this only among the *Phœnicians* and *Egyptians*, but where-ever the Devil reigned, the Serpent was had in some peculiar veneration: thence *Justin Martyr* saith, Ἰδοὺ πάντι νομιζομένων παρ' ὑμῶν θεῶν ὅτις σύμβολον μέγα καὶ μυστήριον ἀναγράφεται. The Serpent was the Symbol of adoration among them; and was the proper Indicium, or note of a consecrated place as is evident by that of *Persius*.

Antiq. lect.
l. 2. c. 7.
Euseb. de
Præp. Evang.
l. 1. cap. 10.

Apolog. 2.

Pinge duos angues; pueri, sacer est locus.

Satyr. 1.

Thence the Scholiast on *Aristophanes* on that place in *Plutus*, ὁ ἡγεμὼν ἐν δύο δεσμῶντι ἐκ τῆς νεώ, observes κοινῶς πᾶσι τοῖς ἡρώσι δεσμῶντες παρεπιδενται, so that where-ever any God or Heroe was to be worshipped, there were Serpents painted to denote so much. So *Orus* *Apollo* saith of the *Egyptians*, ἐβαλὼν δ' ἐν ἐλλωσι βασιλίσκον χρυσὸν πεπεπθῆκε τοῖς θεοῖς, they were wont to put the form of a golden Basilisk to their Gods. *Heinsius* conceives that the first worship of *Apollo* at *Delphi* was under the form of a Serpent, whither *Nonnus* tells us that *Cadmus* the *Phœnician* went upon his first coming into *Bæotia*, and from hence he derives the name *Pytho* from the Hebr. פת, which signifies a Serpent. Ut non dubitandum sit, saith he, quin *Pythius* *Apollo*, hoc est, spurcus ille spiritus, quem *Hebraei* *Ob* & *Abaddon*, *Hellenistæ* ad verbum ἀπολλύων, cateri ἀπόλλωνε dixerunt, sub hac forma qua miseriam humano ge-

Heins. Aristarch. p. 18.
ed. 1627.

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peri

neri invexit, primo cultus fit in Græcia. And which is further observable, the Devil was always ambitious to have the world think that the knowledge of good and evil was to come by the Serpent still; thence the famous oracle of Apollo here at Delphi; thence came the use of Serpents so much in Divination, thence שָׂרָפִים signifies to divine, from שָׂרָפִים a Serpent; and so among the Greeks ὀφιδόμαντις is taken in the same sense from ὄφις a Serpent. So that excellent Glossographer Hesychius; ὄφις, ὅτι σπειρώς τὸ λέγειν εἰς τὰς μαγικά· τὸς ὄφεις ἔχει· ὅτι καὶ ὀφιδόμαντις ἔρερον. The Serpent was reckoned among the pedestria auspicia by the Romans; and Homer tells in that solemn divination concerning the Greeks success at Troy there appears,

Iliad. B.

Ὀφιδόμαντις ἐνὶ νότῳ δαίμων.

Which saith *Heinsius*, is an exact description of the *Nachas*; whom they would have so called from the marks on his back, which they accurately observed in divination. Thus we see how carefull the Devil was to advance his honour in the world under that *Form*, wherein he had deceived mankind into so much folly and misery.

3. We meet with some remainders of mans being cast out of Paradise, upon his fall, among the Heathens. Origen

Origen. c. Cels.
l. 4. p. 189.

thinks that Plato by his converse with the Jews in Egypt, did understand the History of the fall of man, which he after his way anigmatically describes in his *Symposiacks*. Where he brings in *Porus* the God of plenty feasting with the rest of the Gods; after supper *Penia* comes a begging to the door; *Porus* being drunk with Nectar, goes into Jupiters garden, and there falls asleep; *Penia* observing it, steals to him, and by this deceit conceived by him. In this Fable of Plato, Origen takes notice what a near resemblance the garden of Jupiter hath to Paradise, *Penia* to the Serpent which circumvented Adam, and *Porus* to man who was deceived by the Serpent. Which he conceives more probable because of Plato his custome, τὰ μυστικά ἐαυτὸς συνάγει συγγραψάμενος καὶ διὰ τὸς πολλὰς ἐν ταῖς συγγραφαῖς γινώσκει, to wrap up those excellent things he knew under some fables because of the vulgar; for which he after speaks of

of his custom in *altering* and *disguising* what he had from the *Jews*, lest he should too much displease the *fabulous Greeks*, if he should adhere too close to the *Jews*, who were so infamous among them. Some have thought the *story of Paradise* was preserved among the *Heathens* in the *fable of the gardens of Adonis* which comes near that of *Eden*; but what footsteps may be gathered of the truth of Scripture-history in the *Heathen Mythology*, will appear afterwards. Thus much here then may serve to have manifested the account which the Scripture gives of the *origine of evil* by the fall of man to be in it self rational, and attested by the consent of such persons who cannot be suspected of any partiality to the Scriptures.

We come now to consider the other grand difficulty which *Seet. 20.* concerns the *origine of evil*, and the *truth of Divine providence* together. Which is, that if *sin* be the cause of *miser*y, and there be a *God* which governs the world; whence comes it to pass, that the worst of men do so frequently escape sufferings, and the best do so commonly undergo them? This hath been in all ages of the world where men have been Philosophical and inquisitive, one of the great *inquiries* which the minds of men have been perplexed about. The true and full resolution of which question, depends much upon those grounds and principles which are discovered to us by *Divine revelation* in the *Scriptures*, concerning the grounds of *Gods patience* towards wicked men, the nature and end of *sufferings* which good men are exercised with. And certainly this should very much commend the *Scriptures* to all sober and inquisitive persons, that they contain in them the most clear and certain grounds of satisfaction to the minds of men, in such things wherein they are otherwise so irresolved: But of that afterwards; Our present business is to give an account of this difficulty from *natural reason*, which will be most satisfactorily done by the producing those grounds from which they have resolved this question, *cur malis bene, & bonis male*, who either have not had, or at least owned any thing of *Divine revelation*. I begin with that which doth concern the *prosperity* and *impunity* of *wicked men*, which men have with more confidence insisted on, on

this account, because all men could not but understand a general reason of *sufferings*, by reason there were none whose *consciences* could wholly acquit them of *evil actions*; but why persons notoriously *wicked* should live in *impunity*, when others *suffer*, that they were unable to give an account of. And this was the common pretence of *Atheism*, as *Simplicius* tells us, συμβαίνει δὲ πᾶσι καὶ διὰ τὸ ἀναπιδείκναι π-

Comment. in
Epistlet. c. 38.
p. 223.

σθεῖν, καὶ διὰ τὸ ὁρᾶν, ποτὲ καὶ ἀγαθὸς δυστυχῆσαι, ποτὲ ὁ κακὸς ἐν εὐνοίᾳ εὐοδῆσαι, ὁλιγωρεῖν ὧν ἔχουσιν περὶ ἀλήθειαν, καὶ χάριν διδοῖν τῇ τραγωδίᾳ λέγειν.

Τολμᾷ καλεσθῆναι μηδὲν ἔκ τῶν θεῶν,
κακοὶ δὲ εὐτυχῆτες ἐπιπλήσσει με.

It comes to pass, that such who have no grounded belief of a Deity, when they observe the miseries of good men, and the tranquillity and felicity of bad men, they regard not the common notions they have of a Deity, and are ready to cry out with the Tragædian (or rather of Aristophanes in his Plutus.)

*Shall I not dare to say there are no Gods,
When those do prosper that have injured me?*

And it is observable, that the most of those who have taken occasion amongst the *Heathens* to question providence, have done it upon some remarkable *injury* which they have conceived to be done to themselves, and so we have ground to think that it was more *passion* and *interest*, than any clear *reason* which was the inducement to it. So *Diagoras* resolves to set up for an *Atheist*, because the perjured person was not struck dead in the place.

And *Jason* in *Seneca* when he sees *Medea* fly away after killing his children, cries out,

Testare nullos esse quæ vehoris Deos.

*Thou tell'st the world there are no Gods that may
Where thou dost fly.*

And

And so *Claudian*, who largely reasons the case on both sides, for providence and against it, at last tells us what it was which was the main cause of his doubts, *viz.* the long impunity of *Rufinus*.

*Abstulit hunc tandem Rufini pœna tumultum
- Absolvitque Deos.*

*Rufinus death doth clear the Gods, and set
My mind at ease.*

But because some carry it higher, as *Cotta* in *Tully*, who reasons the most (as became a *States-man*) in reference to such persons who had been *usefull* or *hurtfull* to *Common-wealths*, we may suppose there might be somewhat more of *reason* than *interest* in such argumentations; and yet even in those *discourses* we may still find that the main original of this quarrel against providence, was an over-high esteem of themselves, that they thought they *deserved* better from the *Gods*, than to receive such injuries, or undergo such calamities. Therefore *Cotta* cries out on providence, because such persons who were *usefull* to the *Roman Common-wealth*, were destroyed, when the enemies to it escaped, as though providence had been only a *Tutelar Deity* of *Rome*, and had nothing to do elsewhere. Thence he cries out, If there be providence, why were the two *Scipio's* destroyed in *Spain* by the *Carthaginians*? Why was *Maximus* killed by *Hannibal*? Why were the *Romans* with *Paulus* ruined at *Canna*? Why did *Regulus* undergo so much cruelty by the *Carthaginians*? Why did not *Africanus* die in his own bed? Nay, saith he, to come nearer home, why is my Uncle *Rutilius* in banishment? Why was my friend *Drusus* killed in his own house? On the other side, why did *Marinus* die in peace, and the most cruel *Cinna* enjoy so long tranquillity? with many other instances of both sorts. But this is it which I take notice of these for, because we hereby see how common it is for men to question providence, more out of passion and interest, than out of any solid grounds of reason.

Sect. 21.

Let us therefore appeal from persons who were particularly engaged by some private *interest* in those passages, from whence they would infer that there was no *providence*, to such who stood by unconcerned, and made use of the free dictates of their *reason* in these cases. And such persons when they come to *reason* the case like *Philosophers*, and men out of *passion*, have given *satisfactory* and *rational* accounts why *God* in his wise *providence* may sometimes suffer the worst of men, to go on in *impunity*, when good men may go through the troubles of this world. As,

1. *God forbears wicked men, to propound the example of his goodness to their imitation, to teach them not to revenge their injuries too greedily on each other.* This *Plutarch*, in that admirable discourse of his on this subject insists on as his first reason, why *God* doth not presently punish wicked men. For, saith he out of *Plato*, *God* hath set forth himself in the midst of the world for our imitation; and true virtue is nothing else but an imitation of the Divine nature. And therefore *God*, saith *Plato*, gave man the use of sight, that by the sight of the heavenly bodies, and the exact motions, which are in them, men should learn τὸ εὐχμαὼν καὶ τεταγμένον, that which was comely and orderly, and hate all disorderly and irregular motions; For as he excellently speaks: ὁ γὰρ θεὸς, ὅτι μᾶλλον ἀνθρώπων ἀπολαύειν θεῶν πέφυκεν ἢ το μῦθον, καὶ διαφέρει ὅτι ἐν ἐκείνῳ καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν εἰς ἀρετὴν κατὰ φύσιν. There is no greater benefit man can receive from *God*, than to attain true virtue by the imitation and pursuit of those perfections which are in him. And thence, saith *Plutarch*, *God* forbears to punish wicked men presently, not lest if he should punish them he might do what he would repent of afterwards, ἀλλ' ἵνα τὸ πρὶ τὰς τιμωρίας ἐπιπρόσθετον καὶ λείπον ἀποτρέψῃ, but that he might take away the fury and violence of men in revenging their injuries on each other, that they should not do it in wrath and anger, with as much eagerness as they satisfy their hunger and thirst, whereby they do περιπατοῦν τοῖς λευκοπύργοις, leap upon them who have injured them, with as much fury as a wild beast upon his prey; but men should learn to imitate τὸ ἐκείνου μετῴκητα καὶ μέλλητον, *Gods* gentleness and patience, whereby he gives the offender time to consider

Plutarch de his qui sero puniuntur à numine. p. 550. ed. Fr.

consider with himself what he hath done, before he doth severely punish him. As *Plato* when his Boy had angered him, stood still a while without striking him, ἡ θυμὸν καλῶς, as he said, *punishing himself first for his anger*, before he would chastise the Boy for his fault; and *Archytas* when he saw how negligent his workmen had been, and began to be very angry with them, told them, εὐτυχεῖτε ὅτι ὀργίζομαι ὑμῶν, *It is well for you that I am angry with you*. Now saith *Plutarch*, if the consideration of this forbearance in men should tend to moderate mens heat and violence, how much more should the consideration of the lenity and patience of God do it! καὶ θεὸν ἡγήσθαι ὡς εἶον ἀρετὴς τῆς περὶ ἅπαντα καὶ ἡ μεγαλοπαθείου, and to account gentleness and forbearance to be an imitation of divine perfections. Now what can be more rational and agreeable to our apprehensions of a divine nature than this is, that he should shew his goodness to all, and by his forbearance of so many, teach the world more meekness and gentleness towards each other? For if offences rise by the quality of the person against whom they are committed, no injuries can be so great in one man to another, as those affronts are men put upon God by their continual provocations of him: And if God then be of so infinite patience to forbear such who have offended him, what justice and reason is there, but that men should express more lenity and patience towards each other? So *Hierocles* excellently speaks, μιμῆται καὶ ἐν τῇ φιλίας μέτροις ὁ Θεὸς, ὅς μοι καὶ ἐξ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου, τὸ ὅτι εὐλανθροπίας ἀγαθὸν κοινὸν τῷ γένει πρεσβεύων. A good man imitates God in the measures of friendship, who hates no man, and extends his loving kindness to all mankind. Of which *Seneca* likewise somewhere speaks. Ne Deos quidem immortales ab hac tam effusa benignitate sacrilegi negligentisque eorum deterrent; utuntur natura sua, & cuncta, interque illa, ipsos munus suorum malos interpretes, juroant. The Divine benignity extends it self to all, even to such as affront and dishonour them, and abuse the gifts they bestow upon them. And since there is so much truth and reason in that of *Plato* καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθὸς τὸ ὅτι ὡς εἶοναι θεῷ. It is the height of goodness to be like to God, we see what excellent reason there is for that command of our Saviour,

Love

Luk. 6. 35,
36.

Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest; for he is kind unto the unthankfull, and to the evil. Be ye therefore mercifull, as your Father is mercifull.

Plutarch.

p. 551.

Rev. 2. 21.

2. God forbears presently to punish wicked men, to give them time to become better. This the same excellent Moralist gives as another account of Gods patience, that thereby he gives them *χρεῖνον πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν*, a space to repent, as the Scripture calls it. For men, saith Plutarch, in their punishments look at nothing further than meer satisfying their revenge and malice, and that makes them pursue those that have offended them with so much rage and eagerneß; but God, saith he, aims at the cure of those who are not utterly incurable, to such he gives, *μεταβαλὶς χρόνον*, a time to reform in. Here he brings in the examples of such who were bad at first, and came afterwards to be changed from what they were; for which he instances in Cecrops, who was thence called *Διτῦνς*, because from a cruel severe Prince, he became gentle and mild; and so Gelon and Hieron of Sicily, and Pisistratus the Son of Hippocrates, who from being *Usurpers*, became excellent Princes. If Miltiades, saith he, had been cut off while he acted the part of a Tyrant, or Cimon in his Incest, or Themistocles in his Debaucheries, what had become of Marathon, Eurymedon, Dianium, by which the Athenians got so great glory and liberty? and as he well observes, *ἰδὲν γὰρ αἱ μεγάλαι φύσεις μακρὸν ἐκτρέφουσιν*, Great Spirits do nothing mean; *ἔτι δ' ἀργεῖ δὶ ὀξύτητα τὸ σφοδρὸν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ δεγσθῆναι*, *ὅση ἐν σάλῳ διατρέφεται πλεῖν εἰς τὸ μόνιμον καὶ καλὸν ἢ δὲ ἰλδοῖν*. That sharp and active spirit that is in them can never lie at rest by reason of its vigour, but they are tossed up and down, as it were in a Tempest, till they come to a settled composed life. But as the multitudes of weeds argues the richness and softness of the ground, though for the sake of those weeds one not skill'd in husbandry would not account such ground worth looking after; so, saith he, *ἄτοπα πολλὰ καὶ φαυλά προσεξανθίσιν αἱ μεγάλαι εὐσεῖς* great spirits usually bring forth no commendable fruits at first; which we considering the danger and hurtfulness of, are presently for-
cut-

cutting them down; but one that more wisely considers the generous nature which may lie under this ill fruit, waits time and leisure, till reason and age begins to master these headstrong passions. And therefore according to the prudent Law of the Egyptians, the woman with child must be reprimanded till the time of her delivery.

3. God spares some wicked men from punishment to make them instruments of his justice in punishing others. *Ἐνίοις γὰρ ἀμείλει καὶ κολασαῖς ἑτέρων πονηρῶν, οἷτε θεομοίβοις, ἀποχρίσται τὸ δαιμόνιον*, as Plutarch goes on, God spares some from punishment, that by them he might punish others. Which he supposeth to be the case of all Tyrants; and thereby Cotta's difficulty concerning Marius, Cinna, Sylla, and those other cruel and Tyrannical persons, who had usurped authority among them, is clearly taken off: For Divine Providence might let those Trees grow from whence he intended to take his Rods to scourge others withall. God makes the same use of Tyrants (saith Plutarch) to Common-wealths, that Physicians do of the gall of an Hyena and other hurtfull creatures, which may be good for curing some dangerous diseases; so may the Tyrannical severity and sharpness of such persons be continued ἢ τὸ νοσῆν ἀπαλλάξαι καὶ χαράσαι, till the diseases of the Political body be cured by these sharp Medicines. Such a one was Phalaris to the Agrigentines, and Marius to the Romans: and the Oracle told the Sicyonians in express terms, *μαστρηγύμων δίδωται τὴν πόλιν*; the City wanted some severe discipline. Thence Totilas, when he found what strange success he had in his enterprizes, called himself *Flagellum Dei*, and thought God raised him up on purpose to be a scourge for the sins of the world. And no doubt those strange passages of the Roman Common-wealth (which made Cato at least dispute providence, and say, *res divinas multum habere caliginis*, when he saw Pompey successfull as long as he served his ambition, but presently overthrown when he stood for the Common-wealth) these things, I say, had a higher end than they looked at, which was to make both Pompey and Caesar the instruments of divine justice to punish the Romans for their lusts, ambition and cruelty, which were never greater than in that age. Now then if God may justly punish offenders,

why may he not spare some to make them his *instruments* in the *punishing* of others, especially since after he hath used his *rods*, he may cast them into the *fire* too? as was evident in the *instance* of *Cesar*, who after all his *slaughters* and *triumphs* was murdered in the *Senate*, and that by some who had been as *active* as any for him. And herein divine justice, both as to the punishment of the persons, and the means of it, hath been very remarkable in multitudes of *instances*, which every ones reading may afford him.

4. Therefore, another account why *God* may spare wicked men a great while, is, *That divine providence might more remarkably be observed in the manner of their punishment afterwards.* *Plutarch* tells us of *Callippus*, who was stab'd by his enemies with the same *dagger* with which he had killed *Dion* under a pretence of friendship. And when *Mitinus* the *Argive* was killed in a tumult, afterwards upon the day of a solemn shew, a *brass Statue* in the market place fell upon his murderer, and killed him there. But most remarkable is the story of *Belsus* recorded by the same author, who having killed his *Father*, and a long time concealed it, goes one night to supper to some *Friends*, and while he was there, thrusts up his spear into a *Swallows* nest, and pulls it down, and kills the young ones; his *Friends* asking him the reason of so strange an action: οὐδὲν (ἐ. η.) αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ πρὸς αὐτῶν. *Do not you hear*, saith he. *how they falsely accuse me, and cry out that I have killed my Father?* Which being by the persons present carried to the *King*, and the truth of it found out, he was executed for it. Such strange ways doth *providence* sometimes use to shew how vigilant it is, even when we think it sleeps the most.

5. Though *God* spares the persons of *Wicked men*, he doth not defer their punishment, when the thoughts of their evil actions is the greatest torment to them; *Maxima peccati poena est, peccasse*, as *Seneca* speaks. Sin bears its own punishment along with it. Wickedness is δεινὴ πρὸς βίᾳ διπλοῦς οὐχί, the most exquisite contriver of misery, which fills the minds of those who commit it with continual consternations, anxieties and perplexities of mind. But as that often

often and deservedly cited author on this subject, *Plutarch* tells us, most men are in this like *Children*, who when they behold malefactors in the *theatres* in their cloth of gold, and purple robes, with their crowns on their heads dancing about, they admire them, and imagine them to be most happy men, till they see them *lashed* and *beaten*, and *fire* come out from their brave apparel; so saith he, as long as men see others in their pomp and grandeur, they think them far from punishment, till they behold their *execution*, which saith he, is not so much the *entrance* of their punishment as the *perfection* of it. So that the longer the time of their lives is, the longer is the time of their punishment here; ἢ γινεσθαι ἐκὸς ἀπαται, ἀλλ' ἐγένεσαν καλὰ βίου; they are not punished when they grow old, but they are grown old in punishments. Cannot we say a person is punished while he is in prison and hath his fetters upon him, till his execution comes? nor that one that hath drunk *poison*, is a dying while he walks about till the cold comes to his heart, and kills him? if we deny, saith he, that all the inquietudes, horrors and anxieties of mind which wicked men have, are no part of their punishment, we may as well say that a fish which hath swallowed the hook is not taken, because he is not fried, or cut in pieces. So it is with every wicked man, he hath swallowed the hook when he hath committed an evil action (τὸ γλυκὺ τῆς αἰτίας ὁ πικρὸς δόλεος ἐνθὺς ἐξεδίδωκε) and his conscience within him, as he expresseth it.

Θύμῳ βολῶν πάλαιος ὡς δασυγῆν.

Which in the Prophets expression is, the wicked are like a troubled Sea, which casts forth nothing but mire and dirt. As *Apollodorus* dreamt, that he was flead and boiled by the *Scythians*, and that his heart spake to him out of the Cauldron, Ἐγὼ οὐ τέτων αἴτια, I am the cause of all this. God deals by wicked men, as *Caligula* was wont to say of those he commanded to be executed, *ferit ut sentiant se mori*, he so punishes them, as to make them sensible of their punishments. And as *Tacitus* speaks of cruel and wicked persons, *quorum mentes si recludantur, possint aspici laniatus & ictus; quando*

quando ut corpora verberibus, ita savitia, libidine, malis consultis animus dilaceretur. Wickedness is the only fury which continually haunts and lashes those who delight in it, and leaves still behind it αἴσχος καὶ ἐσέα πᾶσιν, loathsom and terrible perturbations, secret gripings of conscience and self-condemning thoughts for their folly and wickedness; like *Lyfimachus*, who for extream thirst offered his *Kingdom* to the *Geta* to quench it, which when he had done, φῶ τις ἐμὸς κακίας, ὅς δι' ἡδονῆν ἔγω βασιλεῖαν, ἐπέσπουα βασιλείας πολλοῦ κακίης. What a wretch was I (saith he) to lose such a *Kingdom* for so short a pleasure! And though wicked men be not sensible of the loss of a far more glorious *Kingdom* than this of *Lyfimachus*, viz. that of *Heaven*, yet they cannot but be sensible how much they have lost that *Kingdom* which every good man hath in the tranquillity of his spirit, and the command of his passions.

6. The time that God spares wicked men, is not so long as we think for. It is all one, as *Plutarch* saith, as if we should complain, that the malefactor was punished in the evening, and not in the morning; Gods forbearance is but for a very little time, compared with his own duration. We measure God by the short hour-glass of our own time, when we are so ready to confine him to our measures. The time seems long to us, but it is as nothing in it self: ἡ πᾶσις τις τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν, τὸ μὲν δὲν ἐστὶν, the whole life of man compared with eternity is nothing. Besides, all this time God suffers wicked men to live here, he hath them under safe custody; he doth but let them take the air within the prison-walls, or it may be they may play and sport themselves there, but there is no possibility of escaping out of the hands of Divine Justice.

7. God forbears wicked men here, because the time is to come wherein God intends to punish them. This is the highest vindication of Divine Providence as to the present impunity of wicked men in the world, because this is not the proper season for the open execution of Justice. There are but few in comparison whom Justice causeth to be executed in the prison, of what are reserved for the general Assizes; God reserves them for a fair and open trial, for the greater vindication

dication of his *honour*, and manifestation of his *justice* to the world. And although *Gods Judgments* even in this world be sometimes so remarkable, that we cannot but see a hand of *Providence* in them, yet they are but few whom *God* doth so remarkably punish here, to make us more firmly believe a day of *Judgment* to come. Which though it be most clearly and fully revealed in *Scripture*, yet the *Heathens* themselves from meer *reason* have had such a *perswasion* of it, that they have given this as another great reason, why *God* did forbear to punish wicked men here, because he did reserve them for future punishment. For as the same *Moralist* speaks in the same discourse concerning the Soul, ἀγωνίζεται ὡς ὁ ἄσπερ ἀθλητῆς καὶ τὸν βίον, ὅταν ὁ διαγωνίσται· τότε τοῦ χάνει καὶ ἀποσκηνοῖται, *this present life is the place of the souls combate, which when it hath finished, it then receives according to its performance of it.* And as he before speaks, εἰς ἓν λόγος ὁ τὸ Θεὸς τὴν πένοντιαν ἅμα καὶ διαμονὴν τῆς ἀθανάτου ψυχῆς βεβαιῶν, καὶ δάπερον ἐν ἑστὶν ἀπολιπεῖν, ἀναρῶν τε δάπερον. *The same reason which confirms providence, doth likewise confirm the immortality of the soul: and if one be taken away, the other follows.* Οὐσὴν ὁ τῇ ψυχῇ μὴ τὴν τε τελειῶν, μάλλον ἐκείνῳ ὅτι καὶ πᾶς ἀποδοῖδε καὶ τιμωρίας. *And if the soul doth subsist after death, it stands to the greatest reason, that it should there receive either reward or punishment.* Thus we see how far natural light, and moral reason will carry men in the vindicating of *Divine Providence*, as to the present impunity of wicked men.

The other part which concerns the *sufferings of good men* Sect. 22. is not of so great difficulty, because there are none so good as not to have a *mixture of evil* in them, and as they have a *mixture of evil*, so they have but a *mixture of punishment*; none lying under so great *miseries* here but withall they have some *share* in the *comforts* of this life. And therefore it is less wonder, that this part of *Divine Providence* which concerns the *sufferings of good men*, hath not wanted some among the *Heathen Moralists*, who have made it their design to vindicate it, which setting aside what *Simplicius* on *Epictetus* and many others have done, is fully performed by *Seneca* in his tract on this very subject, *cur bonis male sit, cum sit Providentia* (as *Muretus* restores the title of that

book) wherein these following accounts are given of it.

1. God brings them up as his children under sharp discipline for their future benefit. A good man in Seneca's language is, *discipulus Dei, amulatorque, & vera progenies*: which in the language of the Scripture, is, *one taught of God, a follower of God, and one born of him*. Now, saith he, *Parens ille magnificus, virtutum non lenis exactor*; sicut *severi patres, durius educat*. God who is the great Father of good men, keeps them under discipline while under age, and by hardship fits them for the practice of vertue. Thence he bids us take notice of the different indulgence of Fathers and Mothers to their Children; the Father he hastens them to school, suffers them not to be idle on their play-days, makes them toil and sometimes cry; the Mother she is all for holding them in her lap, keeping them out of the Sun, and from catching cold, would not willingly have them either cry or take pains. *Patrium habet Deus adversus bonos animum, & illos fortius amat*. God bears the indulgence of a Father towards his children, and loves them with greater severity.

2. Good men receive benefit by their sufferings; *quicquid evenit in suum colorem trahit*, saith Seneca of a good man, which in the language of the Apostle is, *everything works together for his good*. The sea loseth nothing, saith he, of its saltness by the rivers running into it, neither doth a good man by the current of his sufferings. And of all benefits which he receives, that of the exercise and trial of his vertue and patience is most discernable. *Marcet sine adversario virtus*; as soon as Carthage was destroyed, Rome fell to Luxury: True wrestlers desire to have some to try their strength upon them; *cui non industrii otium poena est*? an active spirit hates idleness and cowardise; for *etiamsi ceciderit, de genu pugnabit*, though his legs be cut off he will fight on his knees.

3. It redounds to Gods honor, when good men bear up under sufferings. *Ecce par Deo dignum vir fortis cum mala fortuna compositus*. It is a spectacle God delights to see, a good man combat with calamities. God doth in Seneca's phrase *quosdam fastidio transire*, passeth them by in a slight; an old wrestler scorns to contend with a coward, one who is *vinci paratus*,

ius, ready to yield up presently. *Calamitates sub jugum mittere proprium magni viri est*, it argues a noble spirit to be able to subdue miseries.

4. *It tends to the trial and increase of their Strength.* Seneca highly extols that speech of the Philosopher Demetrius, *Nihil infelicius eo cui nihil unquam evenit adversi; non licuit enim illi se experiri.* He is the most unhappy man who never knew what misery meant; for he could never know what he was able to bear. And, as he saith; to pass ones life away *sine morfu animi*, without any trouble, it is *ignorare rerum naturam alteram partem*, not to know what is upon the reverse of nature. *Idem licet fecerint qui integri revertuntur ex acie, magis spectatur qui saucius redit.* Though he that comes home found, might fight as well as he that is wounded; yet the wounded person hath the more pity, and is most cried up for his valour. The Pilot is seen in a tempest, a Souldier in battel, and a good man in sufferings. God doth by such as Masters do by Scholars, *qui plus laboris ab his exigunt, quibus certior spes est*: who set the best wits the hardest tasks.

5. God exerciseth good men with sufferings, to discover the indifferency of those things which men value so much in the world, when he denies them to good men. Blindness would be hatefull, if none were blind but such whose eyes were put out; and therefore Appius and Metellus were blind. Riches are no good things, therefore the worst as well as the best have them. *Nulla modo magis potest Deus concupita traducere, quam si illa ad turpissimos defert, ab optimis abigit.* God could not traduce or defame those things more which men desire so much, than by taking them away from the best of men, and giving them to the worst.

6. That they might be examples to others of patience and constancy; For as Seneca concludes, *nati sunt in exemplar*, they are born to be patterns to others. If to these things we add what the Word of God discovers concerning the nature, grounds, and ends of afflictions, and that glory which shall be revealed, in comparison with which exceeding weight of glory these light and momentary afflictions are not at all to be valued, then we have a clear and full vindication of Divine Providence,

Providence, as to the *sufferings* of good men, as well as to the *Impunity* of such as are *wicked*. But however from hence we see how far the meer *light* of *reason* hath carried men in *resolving* these *difficulties* concerning *Gods providence* in the world, and what a *rational account* may be given of them, supposing *evil* of *punishment* to arise from *sin*, and that there is a *God* in the world, who is ready to punish the *wicked*, and to reward the *good* : Which was the thing to be shewed.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Origine of Nations.

All mankind derived from Adam, if the Scriptures be true. The contrary supposition an introduction to Atheism. The truth of the history of the flood. The possibility of an universal deluge proved. The flood universal as to mankind, whether universal as to the earth and animals; no necessity of asserting either. Yet supposing it, the possibility of it demonstrated without creation of new waters. Of the fountains of the deep. The proportion which the height of mountains bears to the Diameter of the earth. No mountains much above three mile perpendicular. Of the Origine of fountains. The opinion of Aristotle and others concerning it discussed. The true account of them from the vapours arising from the mass of subterraneous waters. Of the capacity of the Ark for receiving the Animals from Buteo and others. The truth of the deluge from the testimony of Heathen Nations. Of the propagation of Nations from Noahs posterity. Of the beginning of the Assyrian Empire. The multiplication of mankind after the flood. Of the Chronology of the LXX. Of the time between the flood and Abraham, and the advantages of it. Of the pretence of such Nations, who called themselves Aborigines. A discourse concerning the first plantation of Greece; the common opinion propounded and rejected. The Hellens not the first inhabitants of Greece, but the Pelasgi. The large spread of them over the parts of Greece: Of their language different from the Greeks. Whence these Pelasgi came; that Phaleg was the Pelasgus of Greece, and the leader of that Colony, proved from Epiphanius: the language of the Pelasgi in Greece Oriental; thence an account given of the many Hebrew words in the Greek language, and the remainders of the Eastern languages in the Islands of Greece, both which not from the Phœnicians as Bochartus thinks, but from the old Pelasgi. Of the ground of the affinity between the Jews and Lacedemonians. Of the peopling of America.

THe next thing we proceed to give a rational account *Scct. 1.*
 of, in the History of the first ages of the World contained
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Acts 17. 26.

tained in *Scripture*, is the peopling of the World from *Adam*. Which is of great consequence for us to understand not only for the satisfaction of our curiosity as to the true *Origine* of *Nations*, but also in order to our believing the truth of the *Scriptures*, and the universal effects of the fall of man. Neither of which can be sufficiently cleared without this. For as it is hard to conceive how the effects of mans fall should extend to all mankind, unless all mankind were propagated from *Adam*; so it is unconceivable how the account of things given in *Scripture* should be true, if there were persons existent in the World long before *Adam* was. Since the *Scripture* doth so plainly affirm, that *God hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the earth*: Some *Greek* copies read it $\epsilon\zeta\ \epsilon\nu\delta\varsigma$, leaving out $\alpha\iota\mu\alpha$ which the vulgar *Latin* follows; the *Arabick* version to explain both, reads it *ex homine*, or as *De Dieu* renders it *ex Adamo uno*, there being but the difference of one letter in the *Eastern* languages between α and ω the one denoting *blood* and the other *man*. But if we take it as our more ordinary Copies read it $\epsilon\zeta\ \epsilon\nu\delta\varsigma\ \alpha\iota\mu\alpha$, yet thereby it is plain, that the meaning is not that all mankind was made of the same uniform matter, as the Author of the *Præ-Adamites* weakly imagined, (for by that reason, not only mankind, but the whole World might be said to be $\epsilon\zeta\ \epsilon\nu\delta\varsigma\ \alpha\iota\mu\alpha$ of the same blood, since all things in the World were at first formed out of the same matter) but $\alpha\iota\mu\alpha$ is taken there in the sense in which it occurs in the best *Greek* Authors, for the stock out of which men come: So *Homer*,

Odysf. π.

$\epsilon\iota\ \epsilon\tau\epsilon\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\gamma\ \epsilon\mu\delta\varsigma\ \epsilon\omega\iota\ \chi\epsilon\ \alpha\iota\mu\alpha$ $\eta\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\sigma\sigma\iota\sigma\iota$.

Thence those who are near relations, are called in *Sophocles*, $\alpha\iota\ \omega\epsilon\delta\varsigma\ \alpha\iota\mu\alpha$: Thence the name of *Consanguinity* for nearness of relation; and *Virgil* useth *sanguis* in the same sense,

Trojano à sanguine duci.

So that the *Apostles* meaning is, that however men now are
so

so dispersed in their habitations, and differ so much in language and customs from each other, yet they all were originally of the same *stock*, and did derive their succession from that first *man* whom *God* created. Neither can it be conceived on what account *Adam* in the *Scripture* is called the first *man*, and that he was made a living soul, and of the earth, earthly; unless it were to denote that he was absolutely the first of his kind, and so was to be the standard and measure of all that follows. And when our *Saviour* would reduce all things to the beginning, he instanceth in those words which were pronounced after *Eve* was formed, *But from the beginning of the Creation God made them male and female; For this cause shall a man leave Father and Mother and cleave unto his Wife.* Now nothing can be more plain and easie, than from hence to argue thus; those of whom those words were spoken, were the first male and female which were made in the beginning of the Creation; but it is evident these words were spoken of *Adam* and *Eve*: And *Adam* said, *This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: therefore shall a man leave his Father and his Mother and shall cleave unto his Wife.* If the *Scriptures* then of the *New Testament* be true, it is most plain and evident, that all mankind is descended from *Adam*; and no less conspicuous is it from the history of the *Creation* as delivered by *Moses*.

1 Cor. 15. 45,
47.

Mark 10. 6, 7.

Gen. 2. 23,
24.

Secl. 2.

For how necessary had it been for *Moses*, when he was giving an account of the *Origine* of things, to have discovered by whom the *World* was first planted, if there had been any such plantation before *Adam*? but to say that all the design of *Moses* was only to give an account of the *Origine* and history of the *Jewish Nation*, and that *Adam* was only the first of that stock, is manifestly ridiculous, it being so clear, that not only from *Adam* and *Noah*, but from *Sem*, *Abraham* and *Isaac*, came other Nations besides that of *Jews*. And by the same reason that it is said, that *Moses* only speaks of the *Origine* of the *Jewish Nation* in the history of *Adam*, it may as well be said, that *Moses* speaks only of the making of *Canaan*, and that part of the *Heavens* which was over it, when he describes the *Creation* of the world in the six dayes work. For why may not the *Earth* in

the second *verse* of *Genesis* be as well understood of the *Land* of *Judaa*, and the light and production of *Animals* and *Vegetables* refer only to that, as to understand it so in reference to the *flood*, and in many other passages relating to those eldest times? But the *Author* of that *Hypothesis* answers, *That the first Chapter of Genesis may relate to the true Origine of the world, and the first peopling of it, but in the second Moses begins to give an account of the first man and woman of the Jewish Nation.* Very probable! but if this be not a putting asunder those which *God* hath joyned together, nothing is. For doth not *Moses* plainly at first give an account of the formation of things, in the first six dayes, and of his rest on the *seventh*? but how could he be said to have rested then from the *works* of *Creation*, if after this followed the formation of *Adam* and *Eve* in the second Chapter? Besides if the forming of *man*, mentioned *Gen.* 2. 7. be distinct from that mentioned *Gen.* 1. 27. then by all parity of reason, חולדות השמים והארץ the *Generations* of *Heaven* and *Earth* mentioned *Gen.* 2. 4. must be distinct from the *Creation* of the *Heaven* and *Earth*, mentioned *Gen.* 1. 1. And so if there were another *Creation* of *Heaven* and *Earth* belonging to the *Jews* in *Gen.* 2. we may likewise believe that there was a new *Creation* of *man* and *woman* in that Chapter distinct from that mentioned in the former. Again further, if there had been any such persons in the world before *Adam*, no doubt *Adam* himself was ignorant of them; or else it had been a false and ridiculous account which he gives of the name of his Wife חוה because she was אמ כל חי the mother of all living. Not of all living things, for that had been a more proper description of a *Ceres*, or *Magna Mater*, or *Diana multimammia*, of our Grand mother the earth, but certainly it extends to all of the kind, that all living creatures that are of humane nature came from her. So the *Chaldee Paraphrast* understands it, she was called *Harva*, because she was אמנו כל בני אנשו the mother of all the Sons of men. And so the *Arabick* version, quia ipsa fuit mater omnis viventis rationalis. To which purpose our Learned *Selden* cites the version of the *Mauritanian Jews*, and the *Persick* of *Tammasius*.

Gen. 3. 20.

Selden de jure natur. & gen. lib. 5. p. 65.

But

But whatever the credit or authority of these versions be, this is most certain, that *Adam* had no reason at all to have given this name to his wife, as being the *Mother of all living*, if there had been any of mankind existing in the world from other mothers, which had been long before *Eve* was formed. So that we find it plain and clear, that if the report given of things in *Scripture* be true, the *hypothesis* of *Præ-Adamites* is undoubtedly false. And certainly whoever seriously considers the frequent reflections on the Authority of the *Scriptures* which were cast by the *author* of that *Fiction*, and his endeavouring on all occasions to *derogate* from the *miracles* recorded in it, may easily suspect the design of that *Author* was not to gain any credit to his opinion from those arguments from *Scripture*, which he makes shew of (which are pitifully weak and ridiculous) but having by the help of such arguments made his opinion more plausible, his hope was, that his opinion would in time undermine the *Scriptures* themselves. When he had made it appear that the account given in the *Scriptures* of the plantation of the World was unsatisfactory, since there were men before *Adam*, which the *Scriptures* to please the *Jewish Nation*, take no notice of. So that after he had attempted to *prostitute* the *Scriptures* to his opinion, his next work had been to have turned them out of doors, as not of credit to be relied on by any when they were so common to every opinion. But how impious, absurd and rude that attempt was upon the *sacred and inviolable authority* of the *Scriptures*, hath been so fully discovered by his very many not unlearned adversaries, that it might seem needless so much as to have taken notice of so weakly grounded, and infirmly proved an opinion, had it not thus far lain in my way in order to the clearing the true *Origine* of *Nations* according to the *Scriptures*. The main *foundations* of which fabulous opinion lying chiefly in the pretended *antiquities* of the *Chaldeans*, *Egyptians*, and others, have been fully taken away in our first book, where our whole design was to manifest the want of *credibility* in those *accounts* of *ancient times*, which are delivered by *Heathen Nations* in opposition to the *Scriptures*. There is nothing at all in *Scripture* from the *Crea-*

tion of *Adam* to the *flood* which seems to give any countenance to that *figment*, but only what may be easily resolved from the *consideration* of the great *conciseness* of the *Mosaick History*, in reporting that long interval of time which was between the fall of *Adam*, and the *Flood* : By means of which conciseness such things are reported as speedily done, because immediately succeeding in the story, which asked a very considerable time before they could be effected ; and besides, all things which were done before the *Flood*, being all quite obliterated by it, and all the numerous posterity of *Adam* being then destroyed (only *Noah* and his Family excepted) to what purpose had it been any further to have reported the *passages* before the *Flood*, otherwise than thereby to let us understand the *certainty* of the *succession* of persons from *Adam*, and such *actions* in those times which might be remarkable *discoveries* of *Gods providence* and mans *wickedness* in it, which being most apparent at first in *Cain* and his posterity, did by degrees so spread it self over the face of the then inhabited World, that the just *God* was thereby provoked to send a *Deluge* among them to sweep away the present inhabitants to make room for another *Generation* to succeed them.

Sect. 3.

This therefore we now come to consider, viz. *The History of the flood*, and the *certainty of the propagation of the world* from the posterity of *Noah* after the *Flood*. I begin with the *History of the Flood* it self, as to which, two things will be sufficient to demonstrate the truth of it. 1. *If there be nothing in it repugnant to reason.* 2. *If we have sufficient evidence of the truth of it, from such who have not yet believed the Scriptures.* There are only two things which seem questionable to reason concerning the flood ; the first, is, concerning the possibility of the flood it self ; the other is, concerning the capacity of the *Ark* for preserving all kinds of *Animals*. The only ground of questioning the possibility of such a *Flood*, as that is related in *Scripture*, hath been from hence, that some have supposed it impossible, that all the water which is contained in the air, supposing it to fall down, should raise the surface of water upon the earth a foot and a half in height ; so that either new waters must be created to

OVER-

overflow the earth, or else there must be supposed a rarefaction of the Water contained in the Sea and all Rivers, so that it must take up at least fifteen times the space that now it doth; but then they say, if the Water had been thus rarified, it could neither have destroyed man nor beast, neither could Noahs Ark have been born up by it any more than by liquid Air. To this therefore, I answer,

First, I cannot see any urgent necessity from the Scripture to assert, that the Flood did spread it self over all the surface of the earth. That all mankind (those in the Ark excepted) were destroyed by it, is most certain according to the Scriptures. When the occasion of the Flood is thus expressed,

Gen. 6. 5, 7.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the Earth.

It could not be then any particular deluge of so small a Countrey as Palestine, which is here expressed, as some have ridiculously imagined; for we find an universal corruption in the earth mentioned as the cause; an universal threatening upon all men for this cause; and afterwards an universal destruction expressed, as the effect of this Flood. And

Gen. 7. 21, 23.

And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, and every man. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground both man and cattel, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the Heaven, and they were destroyed from the earth, and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the Ark. So then it is evident that the Flood was universal as to mankind, but from thence follows no necessity at all of asserting the universality of it as to the Globe of the earth, unless it be sufficiently proved, that the whole earth was peopled before the Flood: which I despair of ever seeing proved. And what reason can there be to extend the Flood beyond the occasion of it, which was the corruption of mankind? And it seems very strange, that in so short an Interval, in comparifon, as that was from Adam to the flood, according to the ordinary computation viz. 1656.

years, and not much above two thousand, according to the largest, the world should then be fully peopled, when in so much

much

much longer a *space of time* since the *flood* to this day, the earth is capable of receiving far more *inhabitants*, than now it hath. The only probability then left for asserting the *universality* of the *Flood*, as to the *Globe* of the *Earth*, is from the destruction of all *living creatures* together with *man*; now though men might not have spread themselves over the whole *surface* of the *earth*, yet *beasts* and *creeping things* might, which were all destroyed with the *Flood*: For it is said, *That all flesh dyed that moved upon the Earth, both of fowl and of cattel, and of beast, and of every creeping thing, that creepeth upon the earth, and every man.* To what end should there be not only a note of universality added, but such a particular enumeration of the several *kinds* of *beasts*, *creeping things*, and *fowls*, if they were not all destroyed? To this I answer. I grant as far as the *Flood* extended, all these were destroyed; but I see no reason to extend the *destruction* of these beyond that *compass* and *space* of *earth* where men inhabited: Because the punishment upon the *beasts*, was *occasioned by*, and could not but be *concomitant* with the *destruction* of *mankind*, but (the occasion of the *deluge* being the *sin* of *man*, who was punished in the *beasts* that were destroyed for his sake, as well as in himself) where the *occasion* was not, as where there were *animals*, and no men, there seems no necessity of extending the *Flood* thither. But to what end then, it will be replied, did God command Noah, with so much care to take of all *kinds* of *beasts* and *birds*, and *creeping things* into the *Ark* with him, if all these *living creatures* were not destroyed by the *Flood*? I answer, because all those things were destroyed where-ever the *Flood* was; suppose then the whole *Continent* of *Asia* was peopled before the *Flood*, which is as much as we may in reason suppose, I say, all the *living Creatures* in that continent were all destroyed; or if we may suppose it to have extended over our whole *Continent* of the *anciently known world*; what reason would there be that in the opposite part of the *globe*, viz. *America*, which we suppose to be unpeopled then, all the *living creatures* should there be destroyed, because men had sinned in this? And would there not on this supposition have been a sufficient reason

reason to preserve *living creatures* in the *Ark* for future propagation, when all other *living creatures* extant had been in such remote places as would not have been accessible by them in many generations, and those *beasts* growing wild for want of *Inhabitants*, would not have proved presently serviceable for the use of men after the *Flood*? Which was certainly the main thing looked at in the preservation of them in the *Ark*, that men might have all of them ready for their use presently after the *Flood*, which could not have been, had not the several *kinds* been preserved in the *Ark*, although we suppose them not destroyed in all parts of the World.

All this proceeds on supposition that *animals* were propagated much further in the World than men were, before the *Flood*. Which I confess seems very probable to me, on this account, because the production of *animals* is parallel in *Genesis* with that of *Fishes*, and both of them different from man; For God saith, *Let the Waters bring forth every moving creature that hath life*; viz. *Fish and Fowl*; and accordingly it is said, *that the Waters brought forth abundantly every living creature after their kind, and every Fowl after his kind*. Accordingly in the production of *beasts*, we read, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after his kind, and it was so*: But in the production of man, it is said, *Let us make man in our own likeness*. From hence observe this difference between the production of *animals*, and of man, that in the one God gave a prolifick power to the *Earth* and *Waters* for production of the several *living creatures* which came from them; so that the *seminal principles* of them were contained in the matter out of which they were produced, which was otherwise in man, who was made by a peculiar hand of the great Creator himself, who thence is said to have *formed man of the dust of the ground*. Now therefore although there were but one *Male* and *Female* of mankind at first, which had a special formation by God himself; yet there is no reason we should conceive it to be so as to the production of other *living creatures*, whether *Fish*, or *Fowl*, or *Beasts*; but the prolifick vertue being

Seet. 4.

Gen. I. 20, 21.

Ver. 24.

I Ver. 26.

Gen. 2. 6.

ing by *Gods power* given to that *material principle* out of which they were formed, it may very well be supposed that many of the same kind were at first produced. For it seems very strange to imagine that in the whole *Ocean* there should be only *two* of a kind produced; but *Fish* and *Fowl* both arising from the *water*, we may have just reason to think, that the *waters* being separated before this *prolifick vertue* was communicated to the whole *mass* of *Waters* might in the several *parts* of the *globe* of the *earth*, bring forth both *fish* and *fowl* after their kinds. The same I say of the production of *Animals* in the sixth days work, which are ranked into three sorts, *Cattle*, *Creeping-things*, and *beasts* of the *earth* after their kinds; Now *God* saying, *Let the earth bring forth her living creatures*, (and that after the *waters* had divided some parts of the *earth* from other, so that there could be no passage for the *Cattle*, *Creeping-things*, and *beasts* out of one part into another, without the help of man) it seems very probable that at least those *parts* of the *earth* which were thus divided from each other, did bring forth these several living *creatures* after their kinds, which did after propagate in those parts without being brought thither by the help of man. If now this *supposition* be embraced, by it we presently clear our selves of many *difficulties* concerning the *propagation* of *Animals* in the *World*, and their conversation in the *Ark*, which many have been so much to seek for satisfaction in. As how the unknown kind of *Serpents* in *Brasil*, the *slow-bellied* creature of the *Indies*, and all those strange *species* of *Animals* seen in the *West-Indies* should either come into the *Ark* of *Noah*, or be conveyed out of it into those *Countries* which are divided from that *Continent* where the *Flood* was by so vast an *Ocean* on the one side, and at least so large a tract of *Land* on the other (supposing any passage out of one *Continent* into another, which yet hath not been discovered.) Besides some kind of *Animals* cannot live out of that particular *Clime* wherein they are; and there are many sorts of *animals* discovered in *America*, and the adjoining *Islands*, which have left no remainders of themselves in these parts of the *World*. And it seems very strange that

these

these should propagate into those remote parts of the world from the place of the Flood, and leave none at all of their number behind them in those parts from whence they were propagated. These things at least make that opinion very probable which extends the production of Animals beyond that of Mankind in the old World, and that the Flood though it destroyed all mankind, and every living creature within that compass wherein mankind inhabited, yet might not extend it self to those parts, and the Animals therein, in which men had never inhabited. And by this means we need not make so many miracles as some are fain to do about the flood; and all those difficulties concerning the propagation of animals do of themselves vanish and fall to the ground. This is the first way of resolving the difficulty concerning the possibility of the Flood, by asserting it not to have been over the whole globe of the earth, but only over those parts where mankind inhabited.

Secondly, Suppose the Flood to have been over the whole globe of the earth, yet there might have been water enough to have overwhelmed it to the height mentioned in Scripture. For which we are to consider that many causes concurred to the making of this Deluge; first, the air was condensed into clouds, and those fell down with continued force and violence, not breaking into drops, but all in a body (which Sir Walter Raleigh parallels with the spouts of the West-Indies) which are thence called the Cataracts or Flood-gates of Heaven, God loosening (as he expresseth it) the power retentive which was in the Clouds, and so the waters must needs fall in abundance, according to the expression of Job, Behold he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up, also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth. Now, I say, although these waters falling down with so much fury and violence, as well as in so great abundance, might quickly destroy all living creatures; yet this was not all; for God who held in the Ocean within its bounds, whereby he saith to it, Thus far it shall go, and no further, might then give it commission to execute his justice upon the sinfull World: and to all this, we have another cause of the Deluge, which was, That the Fountains of the great

Sect. 5.

Hist. of the world. 1. B. 6. 7. Sect. 6.

Job 12. 15.

Gen. 7. 11.

Ibid.

Tom. 2. op.
 Phys. sect. 3.
 l. 1.

Deep were broken up. By which *Vatablus* most probably understands, *Immensam illam & profundam aquarum copiam quæ est subter terram*: That vast body of Waters which lies in the bowels of the Earth. Now when all these fountains were broken up, and the Waters within the earth rush out with violence and impetuosity upon it, it must needs cause an inundation so great as that is mentioned in the Scripture. For as that judicious Historian Sir W. Raleigh observes, Let us consider that the earth had above 21000 Miles compass, the Diameter of the Earth according to that circle 7000 Miles, and then from the Superficies to the Center 3500 Miles; take then the highest mountain of the world, *Caucasus*, *Taurus*, *Teneriff*, or any other, and I do not find faith he, that the highest exceeds thirty miles in height: It is not then impossible, answering reason with reason, that all those Waters mixed within the earth, 3500 miles deep, should be able to cover the space of 30 miles in height, which 30 miles upright being found in the depths of the earth 116 times; for the Fountains of the great Deep were broken, and the Waters drawn out of the bowels of the earth. But then withall, faith he, if we consider the proportion which the earth bears to the air about it, we may easily understand the possibility of the Flood, without any new creation of waters; for supposing so much air to be condensed, and so turned into Water which doth encompass the Earth, it will not seem strange to men of judgment, yea but of ordinary understanding, that the Earth (*God* so pleasing) was covered over with Waters, without any new Creation. But this will yet appear more probable if the height of the highest mountains doth bear no greater a proportion to the Diameter of the Earth, than of the 1670 part to the whole, supposing the Diameter of the Earth to be 8355 Miles, as *P. Gassendus* computes both. And it is more than probable, that men have been exceedingly mistaken, as to the height of mountains, which comes so far short of what Sir *Walter Raleigh* allows to them, that the highest Mountain in the World will not be found to be five direct miles in height, taking the altitude of them from the plain they stand upon. *Olympus* whose height is

so.

so extolled by the Poets and ancient Greeks, that it is said to exceed the clouds, yet *Plutarch* tells us that *Xenagoras* measured it and found it not to exceed a mile and a half perpendicular, and about 70 paces. Much about the same height *Pliny* saith that *Dicaearchus* found the mountain *Pelion* to be. The mount *Athos* is supposed of extraordinary height, because it casts its shadows into the *Isle of Lemnos*, which according to *Pliny* was 87 miles; yet *Gassendus* allows it but two miles in height, but *Isaac Vossius* in a learned discourse concerning the height of mountains in his notes on *Pomponius Mela*, doth not allow above 10 or 11 furlongs at most to the height of mount *Athos*. *Caucasus* by *Ricciolus* is said to be 51 miles in height: *Gassendus* allowing it to be higher than *Athos* or *Olympus*, yet conceives it not above three or four miles at most; but *Vossius* will not yield it above two miles perpendicular, for which he gives this very good reason; *Polybius* affirms, there is no mountain in *Greece* which may not be ascended in a days time, and makes the highest mountain there not to exceed ten furlongs; which saith *Vossius*, it is scarce possible for any one to reach unless he be a mountainer born; any other will scarce be able to ascend above six furlongs perpendicular; for in the ascent of a mountain every pace doth reach but to an hand-breadth perpendicular; but if we do allow eight furlongs to a days ascent, yet thereby it will appear that the highest mountains in the World are not above twenty four furlongs in height, since they may be ascended in three days time: and it is affirmed of the top of mount *Caucasus*, that it may be ascended in less than the compass of three days, and therefore cannot be much above two miles in height. Which may be the easier believed of any other mountain, when that which is reputed the highest of the World, viz. the Pike of *Teneriff* which the inhabitants call *Pica de Terraria*, may be ascended in that compass of time, viz. three days: for in the months of *July* and *August* (which are the only months in which men can ascend it, because all other times of the year snow lies upon it, although neither in the *Isle of Teneriff* nor any other of the *Canary Islands* there be snow ever seen) the inhabitants then ascend to the top of it in three days time, which top of it is

Plut. in Æmilian.

Plin. l. 2. c. 65.

Voss. in Pomp. Melan. l. 5.

c. 2. p. 115. &c.

V. Varenium Geogr. Gene.

ral. l. 1. c. 10.

not *Pyramidal* but *plain*, from whence they gather some *sulphureous stones* which are carried in great quantities into *Spain*. So that according to the proportion of eight furlongs to a days journey, this *Pike* of *Teneriff* will not exceed the height of a *German mile* perpendicular, as *Varenius* confesseth, than which he thinks likewise, that no mountain in the *World* is higher. For what *Pliny* speaks of the *Alps* being fifty miles in height, must be understood not perpendicular, but in regard of the obliquity of the ascent of it; so that he might account so much from the foot of the *Alps* to the top of them, and yet the *Alps* in a perpendicular line not come near the height of a *German mile*. If then the highest mountains do not exceed much above three miles in height, (for the *Spaniards* themselves affirm, that those lofty mountains of *Peru*, in comparison of which they say the *Alps* are but like *Cottages*, may be ascended in four days compass) we see from hence then far greater probability, how the waters in the time of the general flood might over-top the highest mountains.

Sect. 6.

Especially if it be made evident that there is so great an *Abyss* of *subterraneous waters*, that the breaking open of the fountains of it may so much encrease the inundation arising from the clouds, and from the breaking in of the *Ocean* upon the main *Land*. And that there is such a mass of waters in the body of the earth is evident from the *Origine* of *Fountains*; for the opinion of *Aristotle* imputing them to the condensation of air in the caverns of the earth, and that of other *Philosophers* ascribing them to the fall of rain-water received into such *Cisterns* in the earth which are capable of receiving it, are both equally unsatisfactory, unless we suppose a mass of waters in the bowels of the Earth, which may be as the common stock to supply those *Fountains* with. For it is very hard conceiving how meer air should be so far condensed, as to cause not only such a number of *Fountains*, but so great a quantity of water as runs into the Sea by those *Rivers* which come from them, (as the river *Volga* is supposed to empty so much water in a years time into the *Caspian Sea*, as might suffice to cover the whole earth) by which likewise it is most evident that there must be some subter-

anean

anean passages in the Sea, or else of necessity, by that abundance of water which continually runs into it from the rivers, it would overflow and drown the World. And from the multitude of waters which comes from Fountains, it is likewise evident, that the *Origine* of Fountains cannot be merely from such water which falls from the Clouds, which would never suffice to maintain so full and uninterrupted a stream as many Fountains have: Especially if that be true which some assert, that rain-water doth never moisten the earth above ten foot deep, for of far greater profundity many Fountains are. And besides the rain-water runs most upon the surface of the earth, and so doth rather swell the Rivers which thereby run with greater force in their passage to the Ocean, and doth not lodge it self presently in the earth, especially if it descends in a greater quantity, which alone is able to fill such Cisterns supposed to be in the earth, especially in mountains, which may keep a stream continually running. Although therefore we may acknowledge that the fall of rain may much conduce to the overflowing and continuance of Fountains, as is evident by the greater force of springs after continued rains, and by the decay of many of them in hot and dry weather (which yet I had rather impute to the Sun's exhaling by his continued heat those moist vapours in the earth, which should continually supply the springs, than merely to the want of rain) and by the rise of most great rivers from such Fountains which came from the foot of mountains; where the ground is supposed to be of so hard and consistent a substance, as stone, or chalk, or something of like nature, which might help to the conservation of water there, from whence it after ran in streams to the Ocean (which was the great argument of the famous Peireskiius for this opinion) although I say, these things may argue thus far, that rain-water doth much conduce to the preservation of springs, yet it cannot give a sufficient account of the *Origine* of them: Which with the greatest reason and probability is imputed to those *subterraneous waters* which pass up and down through the bowels of the earth. Some have fancied the earth to be as one great animal, whose *subterraneous passages* were like veins in the body.

V. Gassen. vit.
Pereskii. l. 3.
p. 292.

body, which received *water* out of the *Sea*, as the *veins* do *bloud* out of the *Liver*; and that there are some kind of hot *vapours* in the earth which supply the place of *vital spirits*, which are diffused up and down the body through the *arteries*. And that as in an *animal* there are some parts which upon the least *prick* do send forth *bloud*, and others are more *callous* where the *incision* must be deeper before any *bloud* appears; so it is in the *Earth*, when it is opened in a *right vein* we find presently a *spring* of *water*; but if we chance to hit on a wrong place, we may go deep and find none; not that *Water* is wanting, but we have not hit on the *veins* through which it runs. And thence as the *bloud* with equal freedom and velocity ascends into the *head* as it runs into the *legs*, because it is equally *dispersed* into all the parts from the *center* of it; so in the body of the earth it is as natural for the *water* to ascend into the *tops* of *mountains*, as it is to fall down into the center of the earth. And that it is no more wonder to see *springs* issue out of *mountains*, than it is to see a man *bleed* in the *veins* of his *fore-head* when he is let *bloud* there. So in all places of the *Earth* the parts of it are not disposed for *apertion*; for some of them are so hard and *compact*, that there seems to be no passage through them (which is the most probable reason, why there is no rain neither in those places, because there is no such exudation of those moist *vapours* through the *surface* of the *Earth*, which may yield matter for *rain*, as it is in many of the sandy places of *Africa*, but usually mountainous Countries have more large, and as it were *Temple-veins* through which the moist *vapours* have a free and open passage, and thence there are not only more frequent *springs* there, but *Clouds* and *rains* too.) Now if this account of the *Origine* of *springs* in the earth be as rational as it is ingenious and handsom (and there is not much can be said against it, but only that then all *fountains* should be *salt* as the water is from whence they come) then we easily understand how the *earth* might be *over-flowed* in the universal *deluge*; for then the *fountains* of the *deep* were broken up, or there was an *universal opening* of the *veins* of the earth, whereby all the *Water* contained in them would presently run upon the *surface* of the earth,

earth, and must needs according to its proportion advance it self to a considerable height. But because the salving the difference of the *water* in *springs* from what it is in the *Sea* is so considerable a *Phænomenon* in our present case, I therefore rather take this following as the most *rational* account of the *Origine* of *fountains*, viz. That there are great *cavities* in the *earth*, which are capable of receiving a considerable *quantity* of *water*, which continually runs into them from the *Sea* (which as it continually receives fresh supplies from the rivers which empty themselves into it, so it dispatcheth away a like quantity thorow those *spongy* parts of the earth under the *Ocean*, which are most apt to suck in and convey away the surplufage of water) so that by this means the *Sea* never swells by the water conveyed into it by the *rivers*, there being as continual a *circulation* in the *body* of the earth of the *water* which passeth out of the *Ocean* into the *subterraneous caverns*, and from thence to the *mountains*, and thence into the *Sea* again; as there is a *circulation* of *blood* in mans body from the *heart* by the *arteries* into the *exteriour parts*, and returning back again by the *veins* into the *heart*. According to which we may imagine such a place in the heart of the earth like *Plato's Barathrum*,

Τῆλε μαλ' ἢ χθρὸν βάρυτον ὑπὸ χθονὸς ἐστὶ βέετον.

As *Plato* in his *Phædrus* describes it out of *Homer*, a long and deep *subterraneous cavity*. Εἰς γὰρ τῶν τὸ χάσμα σπρίσσι τε πάντες οἱ ποταμοὶ, καὶ ἐκ τέρτε πάντες ἐκρέουσι. Into which cavity all the rivers at last flow, and from which they again disperse themselves abroad. Now this *Cavity* of the earth thus fill'd with water, supplies the place of the *heart* in the *body* of the earth, from which all those several *aqueducts* which are in the earth have their continual supply; but that which makes those passages of water which we call *springs* and *fountains* properly, I suppose, is thus generated; from those *Cavities* fill'd with water in the earth by reason of the hot streams which are in the *body* of the earth, there are continually rising some vapours or little particles of water, which are

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dis-joyned from each other by the *heat*, by reason of which they attain a greater *celerity of motion*, and so pass through the inner *pores* of the earth till they come near the *superficies* of it. Which when they have approached to, they are beat back again by the *cold*, which environs the *surface* of the *earth*, or at least are so arrested by the *cold* and condensed by it, that they lose the form of *vapours*, and become perfect *water* again. Which *water* being now more *groß*, than while it was a meer *vapour*, cannot descend again through the same *pores* through which it ascended before, because these are not now capable of receiving it : And therefore it seeks out some *wider passages* near the *surface* of the *earth*, by which means it moves in an *oblique manner*, and is ready to embrace any other *vapours* which are *arrested* in the same manner ; now when these are grown to a considerable *body* in the *surface* of a *mountain*, or a *plain*, and find a vent fit for them, there appears a proper *fountain*, whose *streams* are still maintained by the same *condensation* of *vapours*, which when they are once come abroad, are in continual *motion* whereby *rivers* are made, which are still finding a passage through the *declivity* of the *surface* of the *earth*, whereby they may return to the *Ocean* again. Now according to this account, that grand *Phenomenon* of the *freshness* of *fountain-water*, when the water of the *Sea* is salt, whence it originally comes, is sufficiently resolved. For meer *transcolation* may by degrees take away that which the *Chymists* call the *fixed salt* ; and for the *Volatile salt* of it (which being a more *spirituous* thing, is not removable by *distillation*, and so neither can it be by *transcolation*) yet such an *evaporation* as that mentioned, may serve to doe it, because it is evident that *fresh water* will fall from the *clouds* which hath risen from those *vapours* which have come out of the *Sea* ; and besides these *vapours* or small *particles* of water in their passage thorow the earth (especially when they come near the surface of it) do *incorporate* with other *sweet vapours*, as those which come from *rain* and others, by which means they insensibly lose their former *acidity* and *sharpness*. But those *fountains* which do retain their former *saltness*, as there are many such in the world, may very probably be supposed

supposed not to have come from those *vapours* condensed, but to be a kind of a breaking of *vein* in which the *salt* water was conveyed up and down the *body* of the earth. Now then, considering that *mass* of *waters* and multitude of *vapours* arising thence which are in the earth, how ealie is it for us to understand what the *breaking open* the *fountains* of the *deep* means in *Scripture*, and how by that means together with the *falling down* of the *Cataracts* of the clouds, and the letting *loose* of the *Ocean*, the whole earth might be over-spread with an universal deluge? The possibility of which was the thing to be shewed.

The next thing we come to concerning the *flood*, is, the *capacity* of the *Ark* for receiving the several *animals* which were to propagate the world afterwards. Concerning which, two things are necessary to be understood, what the measure of the *Ark* was, and what the *number* of *animals* contained in it. The measure of the *Ark* must be determined by the *proportion* of the *cubit*, which there is no reason at all to suppose either with *Origen* and others to have been the *Geometrical cubit*, which contains six ordinary cubits or nine *feet*, both because we find no mention at all of any such *cubit* in *Scripture*, and because the *Fabrick* of the *Ark* would have been of too vast a proportion. Neither yet is it probable, which Sir *W. Raleigh* supposeth, that this *cubit* must be of a proportion as much exceeding ours, as the *stature* of a *Gyant* doth ours, both because there is no certain *evidence*, either from *Scripture* or *reason*, that the *proportion* of men then did generally exceed what is now; and besides, this tends not in the least to make the thing more plain. For according to that proportion, we must then have imagined *beasts* to have been as well as men; for the *horse* must have been *proportionably* as great to have been *serviceable* to men of that stature, and so the *Animals* would have taken up as much more room in the *Ark* as the *cubit* is supposed to be bigger. I suppose then that *Moses* speaks of the *cubit* most in *use* in his own time (for he writ so that they for whose use he writ, might be easily able to understand him) now this *cubit* by the consent of writers contained a *foot* and a *half* in length; according to which proportion,

Gen. 6. 15. portion, supposing the *Ark* by *Moses* his description to have 300 *cubits* in length, 50 in *breadth*, and 30 in *height*, the whole capacity of the *Ark*, according to the *computation* of *Joh. Buteo* comes to 450000 solid *cubits*. For the length of 300 *cubits* being multiplied into the *breadth* of fifty *cubits*, and the *product* by the height of 30 *cubits* makes the whole *Concavity* 450000. Which *Matthæus Hostus* reducing to the *German measure*, makes the longitude of the *Ark* to be 31 *perches*, 4 *cubits*, 5 *fingers*; the *latitude* 5 *perches*, 2 *cubits*, and 11 *fingers*; the altitude 3 *perches*, 1 *cubit*, 9 *fingers*; allowing to every perch 15 *Roman feet*. So that if we take a *perch* to contain 10 *Hebrew cubits* which exceeds the former 11 *fingers*, the whole capacity of the *Ark* will be 450 cubical *perches*. And as he saith, *Hujusmodi sane edificii amplitudo capacissima est, & quamlibet magno animantium numero haud dubie sufficere potuit*, the *Ark* of so large a capacity might easily contain the several kinds of animals in it. Which will be easily understood, if according to our former *supposition*, only the animals of the inhabited part of the world were preserved in the *Ark*; but admitting that all kinds of animals were there, there would be room enough for them, and for provision for them. For which Sir *W. Raleigh* give a prudent caution, that men ought not to take animals of a mixt nature, as *Mules* and *Hyena's*, nor such as differ in size and shape from each other, as the *Cat of Europe*, and *Ounce of India*, into the several species of Animals. Sir *W. Raleigh* following *Buteo* reckons 89, or lest any be omitted, a 100 several kinds of beasts, and undertakes to demonstrate from a triple proportion of all beasts to the *Ox*, *Wolf*, and *Sheep*, that there was sufficient capacity for them in the *Ark*. *Hostus* allows 150 several kinds of animals, yet questions not the capacity of the *Ark*. But these things are so particularly made out by those learned Authors, especially by *Buteo*, that I shall rather refer the Reader for further satisfaction to the Authors themselves, than take the pains to transcribe them.

I come now therefore to the evidence of the truth and certainty of this universal deluge, of which we have most clear and concurring Testimonies of most ancient Nations of the

the world. For which purpose *Grotius* and others have at *V. Grot. Ann.*
large produced the testimony of *Berosus* the *Chaldean* out of *i. l. i. de Ver.*
Josephus, concerning the *Flood* and the *Ark* in which *Noah* *relig. Christ.*
was preserved, of *Abydenus* out of *Cyril* and *Eusebius* con- *Voss. Hago.*
cerning *Xisuthrus*, or *Noah's* sending out of the *birds* to see *Coronol. g. dis-*
if the flood were allwaged, and of *Alexander Polyhistor* con- *sert. a. c. 2. 63*
cerning the preservation of *animals* in the *Ark*, of *Plutarch* *Bochar. Geogr.*
concerning the sending out of the *Dove*, of *Lucian de Dea* *sacr. l. 1. c. 4.*
Syria concerning the whole *story*, and so of *Molon* and *Ni-* *August. de Ci-*
colaus Damascenus. Besides it is manifested by others, how *vit. Del. l. 18.*
among the *Chaldeans* the memory of *Noah* was preserved *c. 12. 7. ibid.*
under the Fable of *Oannes*, which had part of a *fish*, and part *Lud. Viv.*
of a *man*, as is evident from the fragments of *Apollodorus*,
Abydenus, and *Alexander Polyhistor*, preserved in *Eusebius* *Euseb. Chr.*
his *Greek Chronica*; among the *Chineses* under the name *p. 5. ed. 2.*
of *Puoncuus*, who by them is said to have escaped alone with *Scaliger.*
his Family out of the universal Deluge, saith *Isaac Vossius*, *Is. Voss. epist.*
who supposeth *Pu* or *Pi* to be only a *Prefix* to the name, *ad Colvium.*
and so that *Puoncuus*, is the same with $\text{p} \text{u} \text{o} \text{n} \text{c} \text{u} \text{s}$. *Martinus* *p. 409.*
tells us, *de diluvio multa est apud Sinicos Scriptores mentio*, *Martin. hist.*
that the ancient writers of the *Sinick history* speak much of *Sinic. l. 1. p. 12*
the *Flood*. *Johannes de Laet* tells out of *Lescharbotus* how *Jo. de Laet. de*
constant the Tradition of the *Flood* is among the *Indians*, *orig. gen. Ame-*
both in *New France*, *Peru*, and other parts. This being *rica. l. 1.*
therefore so fully attested by the evident and apparent con- *p. 115.*
sent of so many *writers* and *historians*, which did not. own
the authority of the *Scriptures*, I shall suppose this suffici-
ently proved, and proceed to the main thing which concerns
the *Origine of Nations*, which is, the certainty of the propa-
gation of mankind from the posterity of *Noah*. Of which
there is this strong and convincing evidence, that in all that
account which the *Scripture* gives of the propagation of
Nations from the Sons of *Noah*, there is some remainder in
the history of that *Nation* to justify the reason of the im-
position of the name from the names of the *Nations* themselves,
which have preserved the original name of their founder in
their own, as the *Medes* from *Madai*, the *Thracians* from
Thiras, the *Ionians* from *Javan*; the *Sidonians* from *Sidon*;
the *Philistins* from *Polesthim*; the *Arcaans*, *Arcadians*,

Gro. Annot. ad *Elymaeans, Assyrians, Lydians, from Arki, Arrad, Elam,*
 l. 1. de Verit. *Assur and Lud, and many others produced by Grotius,*
 Ari. Montan. *Montanus, Junius, and especially Bochartus, who with ad-*
 Phaleg. *mirable industry and learning hath cleared all this part of*
 Juni. in Gen. *sacred history, which concerns the reason of the imposition of*
 10. Bochart. *the names of the people which were propagated from the*
 Geog. Sac. p. 1. *posterity of Noah, and given a full and satisfactory account*
of the several places where the posterity of Noah seated them-
selves after the deluge. Instead of that therefore, I shall
consider the pretences which can be brought against it,
which are chiefly these three. 1. That the Chaldean Em-
pire seems to have greater antiquity than can be attributed
to it by the history of Moses. 2. That the most learned
Heathen Nations pretend to be self-originated, and that
they came not from any other Country. 3. That no
certain account is given from whence America should be
peopled.

Sect. 9.

1. The History of the *Assyrian Empire* seems inconsistent with the propagation of the world from the sons of *Noah*; for the reign of *Ninus* and *Semiramis* is placed by many *Chronologers* within the first Century after the flood, which seems a manifest inconsistency with the propagation of mankind from the sons of *Noah*; for it seems utterly impossible that the foundations of so great an *Empire* should be laid in so small a compass of time by the posterity of three persons; and besides, *Ninus* and *Semiramis* were not the first who began the *Assyrian Empire*; for *Belus* not only reigned fifty five years before *Ninus*, but according to the *Chaldean Antiquities* from *Evechous*, who they say first reigned among them, are reckoned 495 years. But admit that the beginning of the *Assyrian Empire* be placed so low as *Peta-*
vius and other *Chronologers* would have it, viz. in the year after the Flood, 153, yet the difficulty is only somewhat abated, but not removed; for it seems yet unconceivable that from three persons in 150 years, such multitudes should spring, as to make so large an *Empire* as that of *Ninus*, and that within an hundred years after the Flood there should be such vast multitudes for the building the *Tower of Babel* and dispersion up and down the world, so that according to the

Petav. de doct
 temp. l. 9. c. 14.
 Tom. 2.

the *Hebrew computation* in the compass of 300 years, viz. about *Abraham's* time, the world was so fully peopled, that we read of several Kings encountering one another, by which it is evident the world had been peopled some time before, or else there could not have been such *potent Kings* as some of them were at that time. This being the grand difficulty, to it I answer these things.

1. There is no such *certainty* of the beginning of the *Assyrian Empire*, as for the sake of that, to question the truth of the propagation of the world by the Sons of *Noah*. I have already largely manifested the want of credibility in the *Chronology* of the *ancient Chaldeans*, and that we have no certain grounds to rely upon in reference to it. Especially as to these seven first *Babylonian Kings*, which are cited out of *Africanus*, by *Eusebius*, and *Georgius Syncellus*, viz. *Evechous*, *Chomasbolus*, *Porus*, *Nechubus*, *Abius*, *Oniballus*, *Chinzirus*, who are said to reign 225 years two months; and a like fabulous, I suppose, is the other *Dynasty* of six *Arabian Kings*, whose Empire is said to have stood 215 years to the time of *Belus*, who expelled the *Arabians*, and took the power to himself; And it is much more agreeable to reason to reject these two *Dynasties*, which have no record of them left in any *History* of the *Assyrian Empire*, but only in *Berosus*, whose authority in this case hath been discussed already, than to follow our late excellent *Primate* of *Armagh*, who punctually sets down the reign of the Kings of these two *Dynasties*, but cuts off at least eight *Ages* in the time of the *Assyrian Empire* from *Ninus* to *Sardanapalus*, which time he confines to 496 years, and placeth *Ninus* in the 2737. year of the world, according to the *Hebrew computation*, and so to live in the time of the *Judges*, and be contemporary with *Deborah*: Which he builds only on a place in *Herodotus*, which relates not to the time between *Ninias* and *Sardanapalus*, but to the time of the defection of the *Medes* from the *Assyrian Empire*, as *Isaac Vossius* hath already shewed. We cannot then find any certainty in the beginning of the *Assyrian Empire*, which may give us cause to question the propagation of the world from the posterity of *Noah*.

*Usser. Annales
Vet. Test. A.M.
2737.*

*Castigat. adv.
Hornium. c. 10
Gen. 9. 1.*

2. We have reason to think that there was a more than ordinary *multiplication* of the world from the Sons of *Noah* after the *Flood*. For as *God* had before punished the world by destroying mankind in it by an extraordinary manner ; so after the *Flood*, he doth in a particular manner bless *Noah* and his *Sons*, and said unto them, *Be fruitfull and multiply, and replenish the earth*, which may well be thought to have then had an extraordinary effect. Several ways have been attempted by learned men to make appear, to what a vast number the posterity of *Noah* would increase in the space of two or three *hundred years* after the *Flood*. *Peta-vius* supposeth that the posterity of *Noah* might beget children at seventeen, and that each of *Noah's* Sons might have eight children in the eighth year after the flood, and that every one of these eight might beget eight more ; by this means in only one Family as of *Japhet* in the year after the *Flood* 233, he makes a *Diagramme* consisting of almost an innumerable company of men. *Johannes Temporalis*, as our most learned *Primate* tells us, takes this way, that all of the posterity of *Noah*, when they attained twenty years of Age, had every year *twins*, on which supposition by *Arith-metical progression*, he undertakes to make it appear, that in the 102. year after the flood, there would be of *males* and *females* 1554420, but taking away the one half, be-cause of the groundless supposition of *twins*, yet then in that time there would be 388605 males besides females. Others suppose that each of the *Sons* of *Noah* had ten *Sons*, and by that proportion, in few Generations it would amount to many *thousands* within a Century. Others insist on the parallel between the *multiplication* of the children of *Israel* in *Agypt* ; that if from 72 men in the space of 215 years there are procreated 600000, how many will be born of three men in the space of an hundred years ? some have said above 23000, but with what success in their *Arithmetick*, I shall not determine. But whether all or any of these ways be sufficient, and satisfactory, we have yet cause to believe that there was a more than ordinary *multiplication* in the posterity of *Noah* after the flood.

3. If we embrace the account of those *Copies*, which the
Septuagint

Petav. de d c-
trin. temp. l.
9. c. 14.

Dissert. Chron.
Sac. c. 5.

Horn. defens.
dissert. de et.
mundi. c. 26.

Septuagint followed in their version, all this difficulty is then ceased. For that account doth very much enlarge the times, and makes almost a thousand years between the *Flood* and *Abraham*, by which means there will be sufficient space given for the propagation of *mankind*, the building the *Tower of Babel*, the dispersion of *Nations*, the founding the *Assyrian Empire*, the plantation of *Egypt*, *China*, and other places, all which seem to have been in that time, and to concur with that computation, as well as *Josephus* doth, and the whole *Primitive Church* before *Hierom*, which certainly ought in no case to be disregarded.

The whole controversy concerning this part of the *Chronology* of the world comes at last to this, whether it be more probable that the *Jews* who lived under the *second Temple* (who then were the Trustees to whom were committed the *Oracles of God*,) whom the *LXX.* followed in their version, had the true reading, or the *Talmudick Jews* after their dispersion and banishment from their Country, when they were discarded by God himself from being his people, when he broke up house among them at the destruction of *Jerusalem* and the *Temple*. But if the reader desire further satisfaction concerning this difference of this *Chronology* of the *LXX.* from that of the present *Hebrew Copies*, he may consult the learned dissertation of the late learned Bishop of *Chester* upon the *LXX.* and the latter discourses of *Isaac Vossius* on this subject. Setting aside then the controversy between the present *Hebrew Copies* and the *LXX.* in point of integrity and incorruption which I meddle not with, I cannot but subscribe to the judgment of our judicious historian, *Sir W. Raleigh*: That if we look over all and do not hastily satisfy our understanding with the first things offered, and thereby being satiated do slothfully and drowsily sit down, we shall find it more agreeable rather to follow the reckoning of sect. 7. the *LXX.* who according to some editions make it above 1072 years between the flood and *Abraham's* birth, than to take away any part of those 352 years given. For if we advisedly consider the state and countenance of the World such as it was in *Abraham's* time, yea before *Abraham* was born, we shall find that it were very ill done of us by following opinion without the

Proleg. ad bibl. Polyglot. cap. 9. ff. 58, 63, &c. Isaac Vossius de LXX. Interpret. & stat. mund. History of the World. I. b. 2. c. 1. sect. 7.

guide of reason, to pare the time over deeply between Abraham and the Flood ; because in cutting them too near the quick, the reputation of the whole story might perchance bleed thereby, were not the Testimony of the Scriptures supream so as no objection can approach it ; And that we did not follow withall this precept of St. Austin, that wheresoever any one place in the Scriptures may be conceived disagreeing to the whole, the same is by ignorance of misinterpretation understood. For in Abrahams time all the then known parts of the world were peopled : all Regions and Countries had their Kings. Egypt had many magnificent Cities, and so had Palestine and all bordering Countries ; yea all that part of the world besides as far as India : and those not built with sticks, but of hewn stones, and defended with Walls and Rampiers, which magnificence needed a parent of more antiquity than those other men have supposed. And therefore where the Scriptures are plainest and best agreeing with reason and nature, to what end should we labour to beget doubts and scruples, or draw all things into wonders and marvels ? giving also strength thereby to common Cavillers, and to those mens apish brains who only bend their wits to find impossibilities and monsters in the story of the world and mankind. Thus far that excellent Historian, whose words deserve consideration. Thus much for the first Objection.

Sect. 10.

2.

The second is, *From the great pretence of several Nations that they were self-originated, or came not from any other place.* This was the pretence of the Egyptians, Gracians, ancient inhabitants of Italy, and others. But how little reason we have to give credit to these pretences will appear on these accounts. 1. *The impossibility in nature that mankind should be produced in such a way as they imagined, which we have manifested already in our discourse of the Origine of the Universe.* 2. *That the Nations which pretended this, were never able to give sufficient evidence of it to any other Nation which demanded it ; which is manifest by their want of any certain records of their ancient times, which is fully proved in our discourse in the first book of the want of credibility in Heathen Histories.* 3. *The only probable reason, which induced these Nations to make themselves Aborigines, was, because they supposed themselves to be*

be the first inhabitants of the Countries they lived in, which although I may allow to the *Egyptians*, and some other ancient Nations, yet I cannot do it to the *Hellens* or *Greeks*, who most vainly and arrogantly pretended to it. Which because it may give more light into the greatest antiquities of *Greece*, and some other Nations than hath been yet discovered or taken notice of, and because it may further tend to clear the truth of the *Scriptures*, as to the *Origine* of Nations, I shall more particularly enquire into the first Plantation of *Greece*. That it was first inhabited by some of *Noahs* posterity, is out of question with all those who prefer the most ancient and undoubted records of *Scripture* before the fabulous impostures of mens brains. But by whose immediate posterity the Country of *Greece* was first inhabited, is not yet so clear as it hath been generally presumed to be, by most who had rather follow the dictates of others, than spend time in such enquiries themselves: Which yet certainly are so far from being unworthy mens labour and industry, that nothing tends more clearly to advance the truth of *Scripture-history*, than the reconciling the antiquities of the elder Nations to what we find delivered of the plantation of the world from the posterity of *Noah*. As to this particular therefore of the first plantation of *Greece*, I shall first propound the opinion generally embraced among learned men, and then shew how far it is defective, and what other more true account may be given of it. It is evident from *Moses*, Gen. 10. 5. that the posterity of *Japhet* took possession of the Isles of the *Gentiles*, i. e. according to the *Hebrew Idiom*, not only such as are properly so called, but all those Countries which lay much upon the Sea, being at any distance from *Palestine*, especially such as lay between the Ocean and *Mediterranean Sea*; and so both *Greece* and *Italy* come under the name of the Isles of the *Gentiles*. Among the Sons of *Japhet* none is conceived so probable to have first peopled *Greece*, as he whose name was preserved among the inhabitants of *Greece* with very little alteration. And so as the *Medes* from *Maidai*, the *Assyrians* from *Assur*, the *Thracians* from *Thiras*, by the like Analogy the *Ionians* from *Javan*. From which it is observable that

although among the *Greeks* themselves, the *Ionians* were but as one *division* of that *people* which inhabited *Greece*, yet other Nations comprehended all under the name of *Ionians*. For which we have sufficient evidence from *Hesychius* and the *Scholiast* on *Aristophanes*. Οἱ βάρβαροι τὰς ἑλλήνας ἰωνας λέγουσιν, saith *Hesychius*; and more to this purpose the *Scholiast* speaks. Πάντας τὰς ἐλλήνας ἰωνας οἱ βάρβαροι καλεῖται. For ἰωνες with the *Insertion* of the *Aeolick Digamma* (which is always done when two vowels meet) is ἰάωνες, i. e. *Javones*, and *Stephanus Byzantius* tells us, that from ἰάων comes ἰών, and so *Homer*,

Hom. l.

Ἐνθα δὲ βοιωτὶ καὶ ἰάωνες ἐλαρχόμενοι.

And *Dionysius Periegetes* reckons up ἰάων as one of the *Rivers* of *Arcadia*.

Dionys. v.
416.

Ἐνθα μέλας ὄρεϊ Κεῖθις ἵνα ῥέει ὕψ' Ἰάων.

And which much confirms this opinion, the *Hebrew word* for *Javan* before the points added by the *Massorites*, viz. יון bears a perfect *Analogy* with the *Greek* ἰών; and יון ארץ in *Scripture* is taken for *Greece*, and so *Dan. 8. 21. Alexander* is called יון מלך which the *LXX.* render βασιλεὺς ἐν ἰωνων, and *Joel 3. 6. You have sold my Sons.* לבני ה' יוני to the *Sons of Javan*, i. e. to the *Greeks*, as it is generally understood. But as *Javan* cannot be supposed to have come into these parts without his *family*, so it is generally presumed that there are no obscure footsteps left of *Javans* eldest Son, *Elisha's* seating himself in *Greece*. For from him *Josephus* derives the name Αἰωνῆς with whom the *Jerusalem Paraphrast* concurs. *Montanus* from thence derives the name *Elis*, from whence he supposeth the *Greeks* are called ἑλλήνες *Bochartus* finds the clearest remainders of *Elisha* in *Elis* the same with *Peloponnesus*, one part of which by *Homer* is called *Alisium*; thence *Ezek. 27. 7.* we read of the *purple and scarlet from the Isles of Elisha*, which makes it most probable to be that part of *Greece* which lay upon the *Ionian Sea*, where the best *purple* next to the *Tyrian* was found, as the

learned

learned Bochartus hath demonstrated from several Authors. This is now the substance of the generally received account concerning the plantation of *Greece* from the posterity of *Noah*. Which if it be taken as to that people which did at length possess *Greece*, I see no reason to disapprove it ; but if it be extended to the first plantation of *Greece*, I see as little to embrace it. That we may therefore judge more freely of the first inhabitants of *Greece*, it is requisite we take an account of it from those who profess themselves most versed in their own *Antiquities*, who may in a matter of this nature which is attested by the common consent of the most learned *Antiquaries of Greece*, be the more credited, in that what they thus deliver, may be supposed to come from an ancient and undoubted *Tradition*.

It is evident therefore, from the judgment of the most learned and judicious, even of the *Greeks* themselves, that *Greece* was first inhabited by a people by them called *Barbarous*, i. e. a people different from them in *Language* and *manners*. So *Ephorus* whom *Polybius* commends as the best writer of the *Greek Antiquities*, saith that *Greece* was inhabited by a *barbarous* people before the *Hellens* came into it. And *Hecataeus Milesius* cited by *Strabo* concerning *Peloponnesus*, ἡ πρὸς τῷ Ἑλλήνων ὄκητιν αὐτῷ βαρβαρί, which *Strabo* himself not only believes of *Peloponnesus* but of all *Greece* that it was κατοικία βαρβάρων πρὸ πάλαιον, *antiently a Plantation of* *Geogr. l. 7.*
Barbarians ; the same is affirmed by *Aristotle* writing of the *Common-wealth* of the *Tegeates* concerning *Arcadia*, that be- *V. Scholiast.*
fore its being possessed by the *Arcadians*, it was inhabited *in Apolloni-*
by a *barbarous* people, who because they were expelled their *um. l. 4.*
Country before moon-rising, the *Arcadians* called themselves *v. 262.*
μερομήνοιοι. Whether that be the ground of that *vain-glo-*
rious boast (of which many reasons are given by learned men) I here dispute not ; it is sufficient that we find the *Grecians* were not the first who peopled any of these several places ; which is likewise attested by *Herodotus*, *Thucydides* and others, whose testimonies we shall afterwards produce. It being then evident that the *Grecians* were not the first who inhabited that Countrey after from them called *Greece*, it follows to be inquired what this *Barbarous* people was, and

from whence they came. *Strabo* hath given us in a large Catalogue of the names of many of them, as the *Dryopes*, *Cancones*, *Leleges*, besides the *Aones*, *Tembices*, *Hyantes*, and many others ; but these seem not to have been that ancient people, but rather some latter Castlings of the *Carians*, who, as *Thucydides* tells us, did very often make inroads upon the quarters of *Greece*. That people which had the largest spread, and greatest Antiquity, was the *Pelasgi* : thence *Peloponnesus* was anciently called Πελασγία. *Stephanns Byzantius* πελοποννήσου τρεῖς ἑπωνυμια, Ἀπία, Πελασγία and Ἀργίς • and *Apollodorus* saith, that the *Peloponnesians* were anciently called *Pelasgi* ; and *Euripides*,

Πελασγίωτας ὀνομασμένους τὸ πρῖν
Δαναός.

And elsewhere,

Πρῶτον Πελασγοί, Δαναΐδαι τὸ δευτέρῳ.

- Geogr. l. 9.* These *Pelasgi* were not only in *Peloponnesus*, but in *Attica* too, as appears by *Strabo*, where he saith the Nation of the *Pelasgi* did inhabit, and by the *Athenians* (that is after their mixture) they were called πελασγοί, *Storks*, διὰ τὴν πλάνην for their frequent removals from place to place : and *Pausanias* mentions their being under the *Acronoli* at *Athens* : that they were in *Thessaly* it is evident from *Hesychius*. Πελασγοὶ οἱ Θεσσαλοὶ • κῆρυον ἢ βαρβάρων, κῆρυξ δὲ πελασγῶ τῆς Ἀργείας γαστέρον πολυπλόκητον ; *Arcadia* seems to have the first or chief place of their residence, for the *Arcadians* who were accounted παλαιότατα ἔθνη ἢ ἐλλήνων, do vindicate the founder of this Nation, whom they call *Pelagus*, to themselves, and say he was an αὐτόχθων among them, that is, the first who came into that Country ; for all those, whose original they knew not, they called them *Terra filios*, and *genuinos terra*. *Pausanias* rightly conjectures that he was the first man among them, not as though he was alone, but because the Chief Ruler and Commander among them, and that brought them into the Country ; but though they might fix themselves
- In Arcad.*

selves about *Arcadia*, it is evident they spread further ; for *Menecrates Eleates* in his book of the *founders of Cities*, *Strabo* l. 13. affirms that all the *Sea coasts* of *Greece* called *Ionica* beginning from *Mycalè*, were first inhabited by the *Pelasgi* ; nay we find them yet much higher up in *Epirus*, who were as *Lib. 7.* *Strabo* tells us, the first founders of the famous Oracle of *Dodona* ; for so *Ephorus* in him saith it was *πυλασγῶν ἱδρυμα*, and that these were *ἦν δὲ τῶ ἐν δόδω δωαυδόντων ἀρχαῖτασι* thence the *Poet*,

Ζεῦ ἀνα Δωδωνᾷ Πελασγί,

And *Hesiod*,

Δωδώνῃ φηγόντε Πελασγῶν ἔδραν ἦεν.

Strabo further makes it evident, that they were a *barbarous* people which lived about *Dodona*, from the description *Homer* gives of them,

ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοῖ.

Σοὶ ναῖουσ' ἄσπετος, ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαὶ ὄναι.

Which *Philostratus* best interprets when he saith they were *αἰσχροὶ νοῦς καὶ ἔπο κατασκευασμένοι ἑ βίον*, such that thought *In Imag.* the Gods were best pleased with their simplicity and severity of life, and therein far different from the *Grecian* humour. *Suidas* in *Thessalicis* (cited likewise by *Strabo*) saith that the Temple of *Dodona* was removed from *Scotusa* in *Pelasgia* to *Thessala*, which is confirmed by *Herodotus* in *Euterpe*, where he largely speaks of the Temple and Oracle at *Dodona*. These *Pelasgi* confined not themselves to *Greece* neither, but were dispersed into the neighbour Islands, as *Chios*, *Creet*, *Lesbos*, *Lemnos*, *Imbro*, *Samos*, as will appear afterwards ; and at last came into *Italy*, as is well known, and are thought to be the same with the *Tyrrhenians*, and by some conceived to be the first founders of *Rome*. We see what a large spread the *Pelasgi* had over *Greece*, which was divided after the *Hellens* began to appear, into τὸ πηλασγικὸν and τὸ ἐνδωρικὸν, as *Herodotus*

dorus witnesseth ; and so these two appear to be a very different people from one another, and not the same under different names as is commonly thought.

Sett. 12.

Which sufficiently appears from their language, which was quite different from one another. So *Herodotus* *Ἡταν εἰ Πελασγοὶ βάρβαρον γλῶσσαν ἔχοντες*, they used a barbarous language : i. e. a language not understood by the *Hellens* ; who at first, had their chief residence in *Thessaly*, from whence by degrees they came forwards into *Greece*, as *Thucydides* shews. For although the name of *Hellens* at last spread it self over all the people of *Greece*, yet it was at first peculiar to that part of *Thessaly* called *Phthiotis*, and thence *Homer* calls them properly *Hellens* which followed *Achilles* from thence ; and it appears by *Homer* that there was a City there called *Ἐνωε*, which as *Stephanus de Urbibus* tells us was there built by *Ἐνωε*, although he will not have him to be *Hellen* the son of *Deucalion*, but the Son of *Phthius*, wherein he is mistaken ; For *Thucydides* plainly shews, that it was from *Hellen* the Son of *Deucalion*, that the name *Ἑλλήνεις* came, and this *Hellen* lived in *Phthiotis*. But although they were first in *Phthiotis*, yet they daily increasing in numbers and power, by degrees they got all *Thessaly* into their hands, of which one part was called *πελασγιῶν* ; afterwards under *Dorus* the Son of *Hellen* they conquered *Hestiæctis*, that part of *Thessaly* which lies under the mountains *Ossa* and *Olympus* ; from thence they were beaten back by the *Cadmeans* into *Pindus*, where the *Greeks* were first called *Μακεδνοὶ*, as *Herodotus* tells us ; from hence they went into *Dryopis*, and thence into *Peloponnesus*, and there had the name *Dorians* ; but before their coming hither, they had first secured themselves of the *Hellens* lying between *Thessaly* and *Peloponnesus*, and there they dispossessed the *Pelasgi* in all the *Attick* region, who were now forced to submit or to fly ; they who submitted, as most of them did, were incorporated into the *Greeks*, and became one people with them, and so by degrees lost that former language which was peculiar to themselves and wholly distinct from the *Greek* tongue. That the *Hellens* did thus gradually come into *Peloponnesus*, is evident from the names of people and places common to *Thessaly* and *Peloponnesus*

ponnesus which came from hence, that though the *Greeks* left the *Cities* behind them, yet they carried most of the names along with them. Thus the *Achai*, *Ionians*, and *Aeolians*, and *Dorians* in *Peloponnesus* came from those of the same names in *Thessaly*; and so likewise the names of these following regions and *Cities* were common to both, as *Ellopiea*, *Estiaa*, *Eretria*, and *Oropos*, *Graia*, *Larissa*, *Psophis*, *Iton*, *Oecalia* and very many others. *Salmasius* seems to be of opinion, that the *Pelasgi* never used any language distinct from the *Hellens*; but besides that it is directly contrary to the testimony of *Herodotus*, the arguments he produceth for it are very weak. The first is because the *Pelasgi* that went into *Italy*, did use the *Greek tongue*, from their calling *Agylla Care*, from *καίρε*, a word pronounced from one on the walls; and because the *Arcades* used only the *Greek language* in the *Aeolian Dialect*, which *Evander* carried with him into *Italy*, and from which most of the old *Roman language* was derived. But doth not *Herodotus* expressly say, that after the mixture between the *Greeks* and *Pelasgi* these by degrees lost their own proper language and made use of the common *Greek tongue*? Yet afterwards too it is evident from *Herodotus* in some places, as at *Crotona*, they did use a language different from the *Greek*. His other argument is, that the names of the eldest persons mentioned were originally *Greek*; but this is expressly denied by *Strabo* who makes the contrary one of his strongest arguments, that the *Barbarians* did anciently inhabit *Greece*; and instanceth in *Cecrops*, *Codrus*, *Aeolus*, *Cothus*, *Drymas*, *Crimanus*. Thus we have abundantly proved against the common opinion, that *Greece* was not first peopled by the *Hellens*, or the posterity of *E-lisa*, although these did afterwards come to the full possession of *Greece*.

It remains that we shew whence these *Pelasgi* came, and of whose posterity they were, and what the language was which was used by them. He that gave the name to this people according to the *Grecian fables*, was one *Pelasgus*, which none will wonder at among them, whose constant custom it was, (partly by reason of their Ignorance of the true account of their names, and partly by their pride that

De Hellen.
p. 345.

Sect. 13.

they might not seem ignorant of any thing) when they met with any names of people, to find out some person near it who was the founder of them. Thus *Attica* from *Aëtæus*, it being anciently called Ἀἰτῶν, and *Cranæ* from *Cranæus*, *Ægialea* from *Ægialæus*, *Mauritania* from *Maurus*, *Scythia* from one *Scythes*, *Galatæa* from *Galates*, and thus in multitudes of other names. But from the name *Pelasgi* we may probably find out the true founder of the people, allowing that variation which is usually caused through the *Greeks* melting the harsher words of the *Eastern* languages into a sound fit for their more delicate palats, as is evident in the comparing the names of the Prophets in *Ebrev*, with what they are in the *Greek version*. Thus the *Pelasgi* may with great probability be derived from פֶּלֶג *Phaleg*; for which we have the concurrent testimony of two learned persons, *Grotius* and *Salmasius*, who are contented to mention it, without bringing much evidence of reason for it. What they only touch at, we shall endeavour to make out more at large; which we shall do by removing the great presumptions against it, and laying down the probabilities for it. The great *presumptions* lying against it are; for that the *Isles* of the *Nations* fell to the posterity of *Jepheth*, and that *Phaleg* lived with *Eber* in *Chaldaea*. For the first, it must be acknowledged that the greatest part of the *Countries* lying upon the *Ocean* and *Mediterranean*, were in the time when *Moses* wrote so inhabited; not that the habitations of the *sons* of *Noah*, had their bounds and limits set them either by *God* or *Noah*, but that the posterity of *Japhet* did chiefly address themselves to those parts which lay towards *Europe*; but yet not so, as to exclude any of the posterity of *Sem*, if their *necessities* for further *room* made it necessary for them to seek for habitations further abroad. For we can have no reason to think, that because the chief of *Sem's* posterity did live together, therefore *none* of them went further off, which *necessity* would put them upon because of their great *increase*; for we read of *Phaleg* and others, that besides those in direct line to *Abraham* (whose *Genealogy* it was *Moses* his great design to recount) they begat many other *sons* and *daughters*, which would make it necessary for them,

*Grot. not. in
lib. 1. de jur.
bel. &c.,
cap. 3.
Sal. de Hellen.*

*Gen. 11. 19,
21.*

them, to seek their *habitations* further abroad. And that *Phaleg* and *Ragau* did so, we have the express testimony of *Epiphanius*, Φαλέκ καὶ Ραγαύ διπνεύσεν ἐπὶ τὴν τῆς Εὐρώπης καίμα γένοντι- De Scythis
 τες τῆς τῆς Σκυθίας μέρει καὶ τῆς ἀπὸ τῆς Ἑλλάδος περὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα, ἐπὶ τῆς τῆς ep. ad Acu.
 Θήρας ἡλικίας, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξ ἑπὶ οἱ Θόες γένοντι. & Paulum.
That from the age of Therah and thence forward Phaleg and Ragau di-
verted toward the Clime of Europe, to part of Scythia, and
were joyned with those Nations from which the Thracians
arose. Several things make this not so improbable as some
 have imagined it to be; for first, it is the constant acknow-
 ledgment of all sober inquirers into the *original* of the
Greeks, that *Greece* was first peopled from *Scythia*; and in-
 deed almost all the *Nations of Europe* have come out of that
Countrey: besides there is evidence of it, even in the *Grecian*
Fables; for *Prometheus* (from whom the *Greeks* derived
 themselves) is fancied by them to lie bound in mount
Caucasus, which must be supposed to be the *Country* from
 whence he came. Again it is evident already that the
Hellens came not into *Greece* before it was peopled by the
Pelasgi, and that these had different *language* and *customs*
 from one another; now then in all probability, although
 the posterity of *Elisa* might come first down from *Scythia*
 into those parts, and seat themselves in *Macedonia* and
Theffaly, where they had in probability more than *room*
 enough at first and a *Country* to their desire: they might
 be willing to permit the posterity of *Phaleg* to pass on fur-
 ther; for in those first plantations we cannot otherwise
 conceive, but that the *last comers* must be the *furthest goers*;
 unless they had strength enough to drive the former *inha-*
bitants out of their *seats* whereof they were already pos-
 sessed, as the *Scythians* did afterwards, and so the *Hel-*
lens; So then the posterity of *Phaleg* being forced to quit
 their own *Countrey* because of the *multitude of inhabitants*,
 must be supposed to take that *course*, where in *probability*
 they might find an empty *seat* fit for them to dwell in;
 thence they come towards *Europe*; for they saw how the po-
 sterity of *Sem* did spread it self *Eastward* already, and *Cham*
Southward, and coming to part of that vast *Country of*
Scythia, which was both already taken up and not so con-

venient an *habitation* for them, they draw downwards towards *Thracia*, and there the posterity of *Thiras* from whom the *Thracians* came had already possessed themselves; passing further into *Theffaly*, they find that already planted by some of the posterity of *Elisa*, but as yet but scant and thin of inhabitants; therefore they disperse themselves up and down through some part of *Epirus*, most part of *Ellas*, and some pass into *Peloponnesus*, where they fix themselves chiefly upon *Arcadia*, and thence spread up and down by degrees toward the *Sea-side*; for we cannot but think that the *Maritime parts* were the last peopled, partly for fear of another *deluge*, partly for want of *conveniency* of *Navigation*, most of their travels being by *Land*; and partly when *Navigation* grew more in use for fear of *Pirates*, who drove a great trade upon the *Coasts* of *Greece* in elder times, as is most evident from *Thucydides* in the beginning of his History. Thus we have a reasonable account given of the *Pelasgi* their first coming into *Greece*, and how by degrees the *Hellens* came to possess their Country, and what a fair pretence the *Arcadians* had to boast of the greatest *antiquity*, their Country being probably first peopled by the *Pelasgi* of any part of the whole *Chersonese*, and the seat of the leader of the whole company whom they call *Pelasgus*, and the Scriptures *Phaleg*.

Sect. 14. Having thus far cleared the *Antiquities* of *Greece* as to the first planters of it, whom we have evidenced to have been the *Pelasgi*, and these derived from *Peleg*, it will be no great difficulty to resolve what *language* they brought along with them, which must be supposed to be the same with that used in the *family* from whence *Peleg* or *Phaleg* came, as to the substance of it, although it might admit as great variation of *Dialect* from it as the *Chaldee* or *Syriack* doth. But this I will not only suppose, but offer these probabilities for the proof of it; the first is, the agreement of the ancient *Greek* language with the *Hebrew* in many of its primitive words; and here we have a most rational and probable account given of it; which is, the *Greeks* mixing with the *Pelasgi*, and both coming to be one people, they must needs retain many of the old words used by the *Pelasgi* in their *Greek*.

Greek language ; which are evidently of an *Eastern* extraction, the ground of which cannot with such probability be fetched from *Cadmus* and the *Phœnicians*, because it is not so easie admission of a foreign Language after the *perfection* of their own, unless by long tract of time, or great numbers overrunning the former people, neither of which can be so truly affirmed of *Cadmus* and his company ; for they were soon driven out of *Greece*, he himself ending his days in *Illyricum*, neither was their spread so large as that of the *Pelasgi*, who were before possessors of the Countrey ; and it is continually seen how impossible it is for any Conquerors, as the *Greeks* were, to bring their own language so into a place, where some of the former people are suffered to live, and not to retain many of their old words among them, and so make the Language mixt of both, as it is in all Nations conquered by the *Romans* ; the *Roman* not being purely spoken by any, but corrupted with a mixture of the former Language in use among them. The second argument is from the different pronunciation and dialects in use in the *Greek Language* ; of which no account so likely can be given, as the mixture with different Languages. This is most evident in the *Dorick Dialect* ; for the *Dorians* inhabiting probably where most of the *Pelasgi* had been, their pronunciation and dialect comes the nearest to the *Eastern* of any of the *Greeks* : For in the *Dorick dialect* the *πλατειασις* or broad pronunciation, is most taken notice of : So he in *Theocritus* upbraids the *Dorians*, *ὅτι πλατισταδουσιν ἅπαντα*, they speak every thing very broad ; which answers to the pronunciation of the *Eastern Languages* ; besides, the *Dorick dialect* delights much in adding a to the end of words, which besides that it is the custom of *Eastern tongues*, especially the *Syriack*, it doth much widen the pronunciation. The third Argument is from the remainders of the *Eastern tongues* in those places, especially where the *Pelasgi* had been. The *Pelasgi* are much taken notice of for their frequent removes and travelling from one place to another ; which I suppose was chiefly after the *Hellens* had conquer'd the Country where they dwelt, then they were forced to go seek better habitations abroad ; thence *Strabo* calls the

- Lib. 5. Nation of the *Pelasgi* πολύπλανον ἢ τὰ ἐν ᾧ πρὸς ἑπείρας-
 σεις · and elsewhere that they were πολλὰ ἔτι τῆς εὐρώπης τὸ παλαι-
 Lib. 12. ὄν παναίεθροι, they went up and down to a great part of *Eu-*
 rope ; but we may suppose them to have made their first and
 chief resort to the neighbour-Islands to Greece ; where we
 shall see what evidence they left of their language there. The
 first Island we meet with them in, is *Creet* ; so *Strabo* speak-
 ing of them, ἢ ὅ τῆς Κρήτης ἑποικιοὶ γέγοναν, ὡς φησὶν Ὅμηρος ;
 Lib. 5. that a Colony of them lived in *Creet*, for which he voucheth
Homers authority :

Odys. 7. 175. Ἄλλη δ' ἄλλων γλώσσαις μεμψαμένη, ἐν ἑσθ' Ἀχαιοί,
 Ἐν ᾗ ἑτέσκεντες μεγαλήτορες, ἐν ᾗ Κυδῶνες,
 Δαίετες τ' ἑταίρας, Διοὶ τε Πελασγοί.

- It is evident then that the *Pelasgi* were in *Crete*. Now
 most of the *Cretan* words are of an *Eastern* extraction, if we
 De Phanon. believe the learned *Bochartus*, who hath promised a dis-
 Coll. 1. c. 15. course on that subject ; besides *Creet* we find the *Pelasgi* in
Chios, ἢ ᾗ οἱ ᾗ δεικνύται ἐκ τῆς Πελασγίας φασὶ τὸς ἐκ Θεσσαλίας,
 faith *Strabo*, the inhabitants of *Chios* say that the *Pelasgi* of
Thessaly were their first inhabitants ; and here the forena-
 med learned person hath derived the name *Chios*, the moun-
 tain *Pelinaus*, and the wine *Arvisum*, all from the *Eastern*
 Lib. 1. c. 9. languages. The next we find them in, is *Lesbos*, ἢ ὅ τῶ
 Λέσβοι Πελασγίαν εἰρήλασι, which from them was called *Pelaf-*
gia, faith *Strabo*, whose name is likewise fetched out of the
 Geogr. p. 2. l. 1. East. By *Bochartus* further we find them in *Lemnos* and
 c. 12. *Imbros* : so *Anticlide*s in *Strabo*, περὶ τῆς φησὶ Πελασγίας τὰ περὶ
 Λέμνον Ἰμβρον κῆται ; concerning whose names, see *Bochar-*
tus 82. I know that learned Author makes the *Phœnicians*
 the authors of all these names, from no other ground gene-
 rally, but because they are of an *Eastern* derivation ; but
 according to what we have laid down, we may yield to the
 thing it self, and upon clearer grounds ; for of some of these
Islands he ingenuously confesseth he can find no evidence of
 the *Phœnicians* being in them. *Phœnices in his Insulis habi-*
 Lib. 1. c. 9. tasse nusquam legimus : but we find it very plain, that in
 those very *Islands* the *Pelasgi* inhabited ; and whether ac-
 count

count then be more probable, let the Reader judge. One thing more I shall insist on, which is the original of the *Samothracian Mysteries*: That these were as to their names from the *Eastern languages* is now acknowledged by all learned men, the *Cabiri* being so evidently derived from כביר, which signifies *strength and power*, i. e. the *Dii potes*, so *Cabiri* is explained by *Varro* and *Tertullian*, and the particular names of the several *Cabiri* mentioned by the *Schooliaſt* on *Apollonius*, Ἀξίεες, Ἀξιόκερσοι, Ἀξιόκεροθ and Κάδμι-
De ſpeſt. c. 8. Lib. 1. c. 12.
 λος are very handſomely explained by that learned and excellent *Bochartus* from the *Eastern languages*; only he will needs have them derived from the *Phœnicians*, whereas *Herodotus* expreſſly tells us that they were from the *Pelaſgi*, whoſe words are theſe; ὅστις ὃ τὰ Καβίρων ὄρμα μμύηται τὰ
Lib. 2.
 Σαμοθρῆνικες ἐπιπλέουσιν λαβόντες παρὰ Πελασγῶν. And again, πῶς δὲ Σαμοθρῆνικῶν εἰκὼν πρῶτον Πελασγοὶ ἐπὶ τοι παρ' Ἀθῆναι-
 οισι σωσίκοι ἐγένοντο, καὶ παρὰ τῶτον Σαμοθρῆνικες τὰ ὄρμα ὄρθλαμ-
 βάνουσιν. We ſee evidently by this, that the *Samothracians* derived their *Mysteries* from the *Pelaſgi*; and without all queſtion they had their names from thence, whence they derived their *Mysteries*: And to this purpoſe it is further obſervable that as the old *Hetrurians* were certainly a *Colony* of the *Pelaſgi*, upon their removal out of *Greece*; ſo *Voffius* obſerves that the old *Hetruſcan language* (ſere à *Syris habet cuncta ſacrorum nomina*) hath almoſt all the ſacred appellations from the *Eastern tongues*. For which purpoſe it is further obſervable, which *Grotius* takes notice of, that the *jus pontificum Romanorum* was taken a great part from the *Hetruſci*,
De Idol. l. 2. c. 57. Annot. in Mat. 12. 1.
 & the *Hetrurians* had it ab *Hebrais* out of the *Eastern parts*.

By all which I cannot conceive but this opinion, notwithstanding its novelty, is advanced to as high a degree of probability, as any that ſtands on the like foundations; and not only ſo, but it is an excellent clue to direct us to the *Labyrinth* of *Antiquities*, and gives us a fair account whence the *Eastern Tongues* came to be ſo much uſed among both the ancient *Greeks* and *Hetrurians*. One thing more this will help us to underſtand far better than any ſalvo hath been yet uſed for it; which is the affinity ſpoken of by *Arius* King of *Lacedæmon* in his Letters to *Onias*, between the
 Jews.

I Maccab.

12. 21.

Antiq. l. 13.

c. 9.

De Idol. l. I.

c. 13.

Jews and Lacedæmonians: εὐρέθη ἐν γραῖῃ ᾧ τε καὶ Σπαρταῖσι καὶ Ἰουδαῶν ὅτι εἰσὶν ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ὅτι εἰσὶν ἐκ γένους Ἀβραάμ· which is explained by *Josephus* thus: ἐν ταῖς νύκτας γραφῇ πνι, εὐρεῖται ὡς ἐξ ἑνὸς ἑν γένους Ἰ. δαῶν καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἐκ τῆς περὶς Ἀβραάμ ἐκείνου τοῦ, They had found in a book that the Jews and Lacedæmonians were of the same stock, from their mutual relation to Abraham. *Vossius* thinks the Original of this was from those of the posterity of *Anak*, who came into Greece, and peopled *Sparta*, and would seem to have been of the posterity of *Abraham*; or that they were partly of the posterity of *Abraham* by *Agar* or *Cethura*, and partly of the *Canaanites* driven out by *Joshua*: But how unlikely a thing is it (supposing *Sparta* peopled by the *Canaanites*, which yet is not evident) that they should give out themselves to be of that stock which they had been expelled their Country by? And for the true posterity of *Abraham* coming thither, as we have no ground for it but the bare assertion, so we have this strong evidence against it, that all that came from *Abraham* were circumcised, as the *Ishmaelites*, *Hagarens*, &c. which we never read of among the *Lacedæmonians*. *H. Grotius* differs not much from the opinion of *Vossius* concerning the ground of this kindred between the *Jews* and *Spartans*: For in his notes on that place in the *Maccabees*, where it is spoken of, he gives this account of it. The *Dorians*, of whom the *Spartans* were a part, came from the *Pelasgi*; the language of the *Pelasgi* was different from that of the *Greeks*, as appears by *Herodotus* in his *Clio*: ἵππου οἱ Πελασγοὶ βέλεβαρον γλώτῃα νύκτες. Now the *Pelasgi* (saith he) are ἡλίβη *dispersi*, a scattered Nation; thence he supposeth these *Pelasgi* or banished people, to have come from the Confines of *Arabia* and *Syria*, in which the posterity of *Abraham* and *Cethura* had placed themselves. But 1. it is uncertain whether the posterity of *Abraham* by *Keturah* were placed so near *Canaan* or no. I know *Junius* endeavours to find the seat of all the sons of *Ceturah* in *Arabia*; but *Mercer* gives several not improbable reasons why he conceives them placed not in the East of *Canaan*, but in the Eastern parts of the world. 2. We have no evidence at all of any remove of these sons of *Abraham* by *Ceturah* out of the parts

parts of *Arabia*, supposing them placed there ; nor any reason why they should be banished thence. 3. That which was the *badge* of *Abrahams* posterity, was never that we read of in use among the *Spartans*, which was *Circumcision*. Indeed in much latter Ages than this we speak of, we read of a people among the *Thracians* who were circumcised, whom the *Greeks* themselves judged to be *Jews*. So *Aristophanes* brings the *Odomantes* in. Τῆς τῶν Ὀδομαντῶν τῆς ἀποτέδεγενεν αὐν : ἐπετέδεγενεν (saith the Scholiast) i. e. ἀπὸ τοῦ πηλὸν ἐλαίοντο δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ πηλόντο οὐ δεῖκεν τὰ αἰδοῖα καὶ σπορευμένα ἔχον αὐτά. Whereby it is plain that Circumcision was in use among the *Thracians* ; for these *Odomantes* were (saith the Scholiast) a people of *Thrace*. καὶ δὲ αὐτὲς Ἰσθμὸς ἔχουσιν. It seems it was a tradition among them that they were *Jews*. If so, it seems most probable that they were some of the *ten Tribes*, who were placed about *Colchis*, and the adjacent places: For *Herodotus* in *Euterpe* saith, that the *Syrians* that lived about the Rivers *Thermodon* and *Parthenius*, learned Circumcision from the *Colchi*, of whom he saith, μὲνοι πάντων Κόλχοι καὶ Ἀιγύπιοι καὶ Αἰθίοπες πετέμνονται ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς τὰ αἰδοῖα Only the *Colchi*, and *Ægyptians*, and *Ethiopians* had originally the Custom of Circumcision. Or else these *Odomantes* might be some of the dispersed *Jews* in *Armenia*, where *Strabo* mentions a *Region* called *Odomantis*, and so they retained the name of the place from whence they came, after their removal into *Thrace*. But whatever these *Odomantes* were, they were far enough from the *Spartans*, who never were thus suspected of *Judaism*, nor laught at for *Circumcision*. So that this opinion of *Grotius* on that account seems not very probable. *Bochartus*, who hath been so happy in many other conjectures, yet here gives out, unless it may depend upon the testimony of *Claudius Isidore* in *Stephanus Byzantius*, who fabulously derives the *Jews* from one *Judeus Sparton*, who went from *Thebes* along with *Bacchus* into the *Wars* ; which *Sparton* they might confound with another *Sparton* the Son of *Phonocæus*, the Founder of *Sparta* ; which yet is rejected as a Fable by *Pausanias* in *Lacedæmonia*. Surely the *Lacedæmonians* were very ambitious of kindred with the *Jews*, that would claim it upon such grounds.

Achæmens. Aët.
1. c. 4.

Geo. v. l. 11.

De Phœnic. Col.
l. 1. c. 22.

Canon. Isag.
p. 332.

grounds as these, especially at such a time when the people of the *Jews* were under distress, and their *kindred* might be like to cost them so dear: and if they had never such a mind to have claimed *kindred* with the *Jews*, they would certainly have done it upon a more plausible testimony than the fable of one *Claudius Iolaus*, that had neither sense nor reason in it; and yet supposing his *Fable* true, it had been nothing to the purpose, without the linking another *Fable* to it, which was so gross, that even the *Greeks* themselves were ashamed of it, who were alwayes the most daring forgers of *Fables* in the world. But let us see further what the *Divine* (as some have loved to call him) *Jos. Scaliger* saith to it: All that he saith, is only a wonder or two at it: *Quid magis mirum quam Lacedemonios ab Abraham prognatos esse*, &c. and a refutation of an absurd opinion, that *Oebalus* the Father of *Tyndareus*, and Grandfather of *Castor*, *Pollux*, and *Helena*, was the same with *Ebal*, mentioned *Gen.* 10. 28. which there can be no reason for, since *Ebal* was the Son of *Joctan*, and so of another race from *Abraham*; and *Joctans* Sons were placed *Eastward*, but chiefly *Oebalus* was within an hundred years before the destruction of *Troy*; but *Phaleg*, Uncle to *Ebal*, died 664. years before *Oebalus* in *A. M.* 1993. Thus far then we cannot find any plausible account of this claim of *kindred*; but though it be an endless task to make good all the claims of *kindred* in the world, especially to persons of power and authority, yet there being no visible interest or design which the *Spartans* could have in such a claim, especially at that time with a Nation generally hated and maligned by Heathen *Idolaters*, we cannot suppose but there must be some at least plausible ground for such a persuasion among them. What if we should conjecture that the *Spartans* might find in the *Greek* version of the *Pentateuch*, which was much spread abroad at that time among the Sons of *Ishmael*, one whose name makes the nearest approach to their *Cadmus*, from whom they suppose themselves derived, for the youngest of *Ishmaels* Sons was called *Kedemah*, *Gen.* 25. 15. which the *Syriack* renders *Kedem*, the very name of *Cadmus* in the *Eastern Tongues*. But this being a light conjecture, I pass it by, and return

to

to the subject of our discourse, which gives a plausible account of the ground of this *kindred*. We have already shewed that the *Pelasgi* were the first who peopled *Greece* (*ἡ τὴν Ἑλλάδα πᾶσαν ἐπεπόλασε*, is *Strabo's* expression of that nation, that it spread over all *Greece*) and withal it appears that the chief Seat of the *Pelasgi* was in *Arcadia*, to which next adjoyns *Laconia*, and therefore in all probability was peopled by them; and besides, the *Dorians* sprang from the *Pelasgi*, and the *Spartans* were a part of the *Dorians*, as appears already out of *Grotius*; so that what *kindred* the *Pelasgi* had, was derived down to the *Spartans*; and we have manifested that these *Pelasgi* were from *Phaleg*, and the Scripture tells us that *Phaleg* was the Son of *Eber*, from whom *Abraham* came in a direct and lineal succession. And thus the *Jews* coming from *Abraham*, and the *Spartans* by the *Pelasgi* from *Phaleg*, they both came out of the same stock: For so *Josephus* expresseth it, not that the *Lacedæmonians* came from *Abraham*, but that the *Jews* and they were both ἐξ ἐνὸς γένους, out of the same stock, and both had relation to *Abraham*; the *Jews* as coming in a direct line; the *Spartans* as deriving from *Phaleg*, from whom *Abraham* came. And thus much may now suffice to clear the first Plantation of *Greece*, and to shew how consonant it is to sacred Scripture; which I have taken the more pains in, because of the serviceableness of this discourse to that end, and to shew what use may be made of this kind of Learning, for vindicating the honour of the sacred Scriptures.

Gen. 11. 17,
28.

The only thing remaining as to the *Origine of Nations*, is the peopling of that vast *Continent of America*, which I cannot think we have yet sufficient information, either concerning the passages thither, especially *East* or *North*, or concerning any records the *Indians* have among themselves absolutely to determine any thing in it. It seems most probable that the several parts of it were peopled at several times, and from several parts, especially *North* and *East*; but to go about absolutely to determine from what *Nation*, in what *Age*, by what means they were first peopled, were a piece of as great confidence as ignorance, till we have

Vid. Grotium
Job. de Laet.
Horn. de Orig.
Gent. Ameri-
can.
V. Manasse Ben
Israel. Spec
Israelis. Et
Spizzel. de Is-
raelitis Ameri-
canis.

more certain discoveries of it. I choose therefore rather to refer the Reader to the bandyings of this Controversie in the many Writers about it, than to undertake any thing as to the decision of it. Only in the general it appears from the remaining tradition of the *Flood*, and many Rites and Customs used among them, that they had the same original with us, and that there can be no argument brought against it from themselves, since some *Authors* tell us, that the eldest *Accounts* and *Memoires* they have, do not exceed 800. years backward; and therefore their *Testimony* can be of no validity in a matter of so great *Antiquity*, as the *Origine* of *Nations* is.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the Origine of the Heathen Mythology.

That there were some remainders of the ancient history of the world preserved in the several Nations after the dispersion. How it came to be corrupted: by decay of knowledge, increase of Idolatry, confusion of languages. An enquiry into the cause of that. Difficulties against the common opinion that languages were confounded at Babel. Those difficulties cleared. Of the fabulousness of Poets. The particular wayes whereby the Heathen Mythology arose. Attributing the general history of the world to their own Nation. The corruption of Hebraisms. Alteration of names. Ambiguity of sense in the Oriental languages. Attributing the actions of many to one person, as in Jupiter, Bacchus, &c. The remainders of Scripture history among the Heathens. The names of God, Chaos, formation of man among the Phenicians. Of Adam among the Germans, Egyptians, Cilicians. Adam under Saturn. Cain among the Phenicians. Tubalcain and Jubal under Vulcan and Apollo. Naamah under Minerva. Noah under Saturn, Janus, Prometheus and Bacchus. Noah's three sons under Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto. Canaan under Mercury, Nimrod under Bacchus, Magog under Prometheus. Of Abraham and Isaac among the Phenicians. Jacob's service under Apollo's. The Patriarcha from Bethel. Joseph under Apis. Moses under Bacchus. Joshua under Hercules. Balaam under the old Silenus.

THE main particulars contained in the Scriptures concerning the history of *Ancient Times* being thus far cleared, there remains only that evidence which there is of the truth of the historical part of those eldest times, in those footsteps of it which are contained in the *Heathen Mythology*. For we cannot conceive, that since we have manifested that all mankind did come from the posterity of *Noah*, that all those passages which concerned the history of the world, should

should be presently *obliterated* and extinguished among them, but some *kind* of *tradition* would be still preserved, although by degrees it would be so much altered for want of certain *records* to preserve it in, that it would be a hard matter to discover its *original* without an exact comparing it with the true *history* it self from whence it was first taken. For it fared with this *Tradition* of the first ages of the world, as with a person who hath a long time travelled in forraign parts, who by the variety of *Climes* and *Countreys* may be so far altered from what he was, that his own *relations* may not know him upon his return, but only by some certain *marks* which he hath in his body, by which they are assured, that however his *complexion* and *visage* may be altered, yet the person is the same still. Thus it was in this *original tradition* of the world; through its continual passing from one age to another, and the various humours, tempers, and designs of men, it received strange *disguises* and alterations as to its outward *favour* and *complexion*; but yet there are some such certain *marks* remaining on it, by which we find out its true original. Two things then will be the main subject of our enquiry here. 1. By what means the *original tradition* came to be altered and corrupted. 2. By what marks we may discern its true original, or what evidences we have of the remainders of *Scripture history* in the *Heathen Mythology*.

Señ. 2.

1. Concerning the means whereby the *Tradition* by degrees came to be corrupted. There may be some more general, and others more particular. The general causes of it were;

1. The gradual decay of knowledge and increase of *Barbarism* in the world; occasioned by the want of certain *records* to preserve the ancient history of the world in: Which we at large discoursed of in our entrance on this subject. Now in the decay of knowledge, there must needs follow a sudden and strange *alteration* of the memory of former times, which hath then nothing to preserve it, but the most uncertain report of *fame*, which alters and disguiseth things according to the *humours* and *inclinations*, and *judgements* of those whose hands it passeth through.

Book I. c. 1.
Señ. 16.

2. The

2. The gradual increase of *Idolatry* in the world: which began soon after the dispersion of *Nations*, and in whose age, we cannot at so great a distance and in so great obscurity precisely determine; but as soon as *Idolatry* came in, all the ancient *tradition* was made subservient in order to that end; and those persons whose *memories* were preserved in several *Nations*, by degrees came to be *worshipped* under diversities of names; and such things were annexed to the former *traditions* as would tend most to advance the greatest *superstition* in the world.

3. The *Confusion* of *Languages* at *Babel*, was one great reason of corrupting the ancient *tradition* of the world. For in so great variety (as suddenly happened) of *languages* in the world, it cannot be conceived but such things which might be preserved in some uniform manner, had all *Nations* used the same *language*, would through the diversity of *Idioms* and *properties* of several tongues be strangely altered and disguised, as will appear afterwards. This *alteration* of *languages* in the world upon the confusion of tongues at *Babel*, brought as great a confusion into the original *tradition*, as it did among those who were the designers of that work.

And because this *subject* of the *Original* and cause of this diversity of *languages* among men, doth both tend to explain the present subject, and to clear the truth of *Scripture-history*, I shall a little further enquire into it. Chiefly on this account, because it is pretended that such a *confusion* is needless, which is delivered in *Scripture*, for the producing such diversities of languages, which would arise through meer length of time, and the varieties of *Climes* and *Customs* in the world. But if we only speak concerning the sense of *Moses* about it, the enquiry is of greater difficulty than at first view it seems to be. For it is pretended that *Moses* no where speaks of a *diversity* of *languages*, as we understand it, but only of a *confusion* of their speech who were at *Babel*, which might well be, although they all used the same language; that is, there might be a confusion raised in their minds, that they could not understand one another; their *notions* of things being disturbed, so that though they heard one word, they

Seet. 3.

*V. Mer. Casaub.
de 4. linguis
p. 3. &c.*

Exercit. in Cor-
dan. 259.
sect. I.

they had different *apprehensions* of it : some thinking it signified one thing and some another : as *Julius Scaliger* tells us that the *Jews* he had conversed with, did not understand by it a *multiplication* of tongues ; but only by that *confusion* their former *notions* of things by the same words were altered. As if one called for אבן a *stone*, one by that word understands *lime*, another *water*, another *sand*, &c. this must needs produce a strange *confusion* among them, and enough to make them desist from their work. But supposing no such division of *languages* there, yet after their *dispersion*, which might be caused by the former *confusion*, by the different *Laws*, *rites*, and *customs*, *commerce*, and *trading*, and tract of *time*, there would have risen a *division* of their several tongues. But if there were such a *division* of tongues miraculously caused there (that as it is commonly said, all those who were of the same language, went together in their several companies) whence comes it to pass, that in their *dispersion* we read of several families dispersed, which used the same language after their dispersion ? as all the sons of *Canaan* mentioned, *Gen.* 10. 15, 16, 17, 18. used the *Canaanitish* tongue : in *Greece*, *Javan* and *Elisa* had the same language. In *Egypt*, *Misraim* and *Pathrusim* ; in *Arabia* the sons of *Joktan* and *Chus* ; in *Chaldaea* *Aram* and *Uz*, the inhabitants of *Syria*, *Mish* of *Mesopotamia*, *Nimrod* of *Babylon*, *Assur* of *Assyria*, whence comes it to pass if their several tongues were the cause of their *dispersion*, that these several heads of families should use the same tongue ? Another reason against the common opinion, is this, which seems to have a great deal of force in it. If tongues were divided at *Babel* as it is imagined ; whence was it, that the nearer any Nation lay to those who had the primitive language the *Ebrew*, they did participate more of that tongue than those who were more remote, as is plain in the *Chaldeans*, *Canaanites*, *Greeks*, and others ? whereas if their languages were divided at *Babel*, they would have retained their own languages as well as others. This very argument prevailed so far with the learned *Is. Casaubon*, as appears by his *adversaria* on this subject (published by the learned Dr. his son) as to make him leave the common opinion, and to conclude

Diatrib. di L.
Heb. p. 17, 18.

conclude the several *tongues* to be only some *variations* from the *Ebrev*, but yet so as many new words were invented too. Hence he observes that the *Asiatick Greeks* came nearer to the *Ebrev* than the *European*. And if this opinion hold true, it is the best foundation for deriving other *languages* from the *Ebrev* : a thing attempted by the same learned person, as you may see in the book forecited, and endeavoured by *Guichardus*, *Avenarius* and others. Thus we see there is no agreement in mens minds concerning the division of *tongues at Babel*. Pag. 47.

But having set down this opinion with its reasons, I shall not so leave the received *opinion*, but shall first see what may be said for that, and leave the judgement concerning the probability of either to the understanding Reader. And it seems to be grounded on these reasons. 1. That had it been left to mens own *choice* ; there cannot be a sufficient reason assigned of the diversity of *languages* in the world. For there being one *language* originally in the world, whereby men did represent their *conceptions* to one another ; we cannot imagine that men should of themselves introduce so great an *alteration*, as whereby to take off that necessary society and converse with each other, which even nature it self did put men upon. Hence *Calvin* and others conclude that *prodigii loco habenda est linguarum diversitas* ; because there having been that freedom of converse among men, it is not to be supposed they should of themselves, cut it off to their mutual disadvantage. But to this it is said, that the long tract of time and diversity of *customs* might alter the *language*. I grant it much, but not wholly ; and they would only therein differ in their *languages*, wherein their *customs* differed : so that there would remain still such an agreement as whereby they might understand each other ; which it will be hard to find in many of the eldest *languages*. As for the length of time, though that doth alter much in reference to words and *phrases*, in which that of *Horace* holds true, *Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere*, &c. Yet it will be yet more difficult to find where meer length of time hath brought a whole *language* out of use, and another in the room of it. But that which I think deserves well to be considered,

E e e

Sect. 4.

Annot. in Gen. 11. 1, 2.

Enquiries.
c. 5, 6.

Method. hist.
c. 9.

Mayes.
Prodr. Chal-
dæim. c. 1.

sidered is this, that the greatest *alteration* of *languages* in the world hath risen from *Colonies* of Nations that used another language; and so by the mixture of both together the language might be much altered: as the *Hebrew* by the *Chaldees* in *Babylon*: the *Spanish*, *Italian* and others by the *Latin*, as *Breerwood* shews, our own by the *Normans* and others. So that were there not a diversity of *languages* supposed, this *enterfering* of people would bring no considerable alteration along with it, no more than a *Colony* from *New England* would alter our language here. And as for another cause assigned of the *change* of languages, the *difference* of *climates*, which *Bodin* gives as the reason why the *Northern* people use *consonants* and *aspirates* so much, especially the *Saxons*, and those that live by the *Baltick* sea who pronounce thus, *Per theum ferum pibimus penum finum*. And so *R. D. Kimchi* observes of the *Ephraimites*, *Judg.* 12. 6. that it was the air that was the cause of their *lisping* and calling it *Sibboleth*, as he there observes of the men of *Sarphath*, that is the *French*, that they could not pronounce *Schin*, but pronounced it like *Thau Raphe*. But by these examples we see that this would cause only an *alteration* as to some *letters* and *syllables*, and rather as to the *pronunciation* than any *variety* of the *language*. So that we see that setting aside the *confusion* of *languages* at *Babel*, there can be no reason sufficient assigned for the variety of languages in the world. 2. Though it be granted, that a confusion in their minds without distinct *languages* were enough to make them desist from their work, yet the *context* in that place, *Gen.* 11. doth infer a diversity of *tongues*, as will appear from the *antecedents* and *consequents*; as from the first verse, where it is not conceivable why it should be there taken notice of as such a remarkable circumstance, that then they had but *one language* before they set upon this work, if there was not a *diversity* of *tongues* caused by the work they went about; but especially, *ver.* 6. where God takes such notice of this very thing, that they had but *one language*, wherein they were so confident to carry on their work; therefore, *ver.* 7. when he would destroy their work by *confounding* their *language*, it must be by *multiplying* that *language* into many

many more; for it must be taken in *opposition* to what is said in the other verse. And what is there added, *their not understanding one anothers speech*, seems to refer not to their inward *conceptions*, as though they did not understand one anothers *minds*, but to the outward *expressions*, as שִׁבּוּ doth apparently relate to them further in *ver.* 8. this is set down as the cause of their *dispersion*, which had the Tongue been the same afterwards as it was before, could have been no reason for it. Again some argue from the name *Babel* given to the place from בָּבֶל which signifies to *confound* and mingle things of several *kinds* together. So used *Judg.* 19. 21. *Esay* 30. 24. *Job* 6. 5. &c. thence the name בָּבֶל and בִּלְבָל the middle ל left out, as in *Golgotha* for *Golgoltha*, *Kigaltha* for *Kilkaltha* and others of a like nature. Besides, there seems to be somewhat in what is said, *that the families were divided according to their tongues*, *Gen.* 10. 5, 20, 31. which doth at least imply a *diversity of tongues* among them, the cause of which must be assigned by them who will not allow of the *confusion* and *division of languages* at *Babel*. Further, this seems most agreeable to *Gods end* in making of them thus leave off their work, that there might be not only a present judgment upon them, but that which might remain to *posterity* as a note of the folly of their *Ancestors*. Those who recede from the common opinion lest they should give advantage to *Infidels* by attributing that to a *miracle*, which might be done without, seem to be more wary than wise in it. For besides that it is certain that *miracles* may be in those things which might be effected otherwise by natural *causes*, when they are produced without the *help* of those *causes*, and in a space of time impossible to *nature*; and that it hath not been as yet proved how such diversity of *tongues* as is in the world would have been effected without such a *miracle*; it must be granted by them that there was a *miracle* in it; and what greater difficulty there should be in the *variety of languages*, than in the signification of the same words I understand not. But I see no necessity of asserting that every one of the *families* had a distinct *language*, and the common opinion of 70 or 72. as the *Gr. families* and as many *languages*, is now taken for a groundless fancy by

Bta. Geor.
l. i. c. 15.
Buxt. diatr.
sect. 54.
Buxt. diat.
sect. 68.

Lips. cent. 3.
ep. 44.
Busbeq. ep. 24.

Mayer.
Philol. sacr.
p. 2. c. 6.

learned men : as is easily proved from the dividing *Father* and *Children*, whose families could not certainly be without them : and some supposed to be unborn then as *Joſtan's* 13 *Children* ; eſpecially if we ſay as many do, that the *Confuſion* was at the birth of *Phaleg*, and *Joſtan* was his younger brother, as the *Jews* generally do. To the laſt objection it may be replied, that the agreement of *languages* in ſome radical words doth not infer the *derivation* of the one from the other, as is plain in the *Persian* and *German*, in which learned men have obſerved ſo many words alike. And ſo by *Busbequius* of the inhabitants about *Taurick Cherſoneſe* ; and ſo in moſt of our modern *Tongues* there may be ſome words alike without any ſuch *dependence* or *derivation*. Again, though it be granted that the *languages* of them who were at *Babel* were confounded, yet it is not neceſſary we ſhould ſay that all *Noahs* poſterity were there. It is thought by ſome that they were chiefly *Cham* and his company ; if ſo, then *Sem* and his poſterity might retain the *language* they had before, only with ſome *variations*. But this is very uncertain, unleſs we take it for *Heber* and *Peleg*, from whoſe vicinity other bordering *Nations* might make uſe of many of their primitive words : and for the *Greeks*, it will be granted that many of their words, eſpecially the old *Beotick*, had affinity with the *Hebrew* ; but it was from the *Pelaſgi* at firſt and *Cadmus* the *Phoenician* afterwards : the old *Canaanitiſh* language, being if not the pure *Hebrew*, yet a dialect of that *tongue*, as is proved by many learned men. But however theſe things be, it is not neceſſary to ſay that all *Mother tongues* ſo called, were then exiſtent at that *confuſion* : but the preſent *curſe* did divide their *languages* who were there, and that all diviſion of *languages* ſince, is to be looked upon as the effect of that *curſe*.

It being thus manifeſted what a ſtrange confuſion of *languages* was cauſed in the world, we may thereby eaſily underſtand how the ancient *tradition* came to be *corrupted* and *altered* in the world.

Another reaſon of the alteration of the ancient *tradition*, was, the *fabulousneſs* of the *Poets* : for theſe made it their deſign to *diſguiſe* all their ancient *ſtories* under *Fables*, in which

Seſt. 5.
4.

which they were so lost, that they could never recover them afterwards. For the elder *Poets of Greece* being men of greater *learning* than generally the people were of, and being conversant in *Agypt* and other *parts*, did bring in new reports of the *ancient times* which they received from the *Nations* they went to; and by mixing their own *traditions* and *others* together, and by suiting what was remaining of the *ancient tradition* of these, they must needs make a strange *confusion* of things together, and leave them much more *obscure* and *fabulous* than they found them. And herein all their *cunning* and *subtily* lay in putting a *new face* on whatever they borrowed from other *Nations*, and making them appear among themselves in a *Greek habit*, that the former owners of those *traditions* could scarce challenge them as theirs under so strange a *Metamorphosis*. For those things which were most plain and historical in the Fountains whence they derived them, they did so περιδέν as *Clement's Alexandrinus* speaks (or as *Origen*, περιέπεν τις ἡτέπλυν) *Stromat.* 6. c. *Cels.* l. 4. wrap them up under so great *Mythology* that the *Original Truths* can hardly be discerned, because of that multitude of *prodigious fables*, with which they have inlaid them. But as great as their *artifice* was in the doing this, we may yet discern apparently many of those particular *courses* which were taken by them to *disguise* and alter the *primitive tradition*.

I. *Attributing* what was done by the great *Ancestors* of mankind to some persons of their own *Nations*. Thus the *Thessalians* make *Deucalion* to be the person who escaped the *flood*, and from whom the world was peopled after it. And whoever compares the *relation* of the *flood* of *Deucalion* in *Apollodorus* with that in the *Scripture*, might easily render *Apollodorus* his *Greek*, in the *language* of the *Scriptures*, only changing *Greece* into the whole *earth*, and *Deucalion* into *Noah*, *Parnassus* into *Ararat*, and *Jupiter* into *Jehovah*. On the same account the *Athenians* attribute the *flood* to *Ogyges*, not that the *flood* of *Ogyges* and *Deucalion* were particular and distinct *deluges*, which many have taken a great deal of needless pains to place in their several *ages*; But as *Deucalion* was of the eldest memory in *Thessaly*, so

Apollod. biblioth. l. 1. p. 19.

was *Ogyges* at *Athens*, and so the flood as being a matter of remotest *Antiquity*, was on the same account in both places attributed to both these. Because as mankind was supposed to begin again after the flood, so they had among them no memory extant of any elder than these two, from whom on that account they supposed mankind derived. And on the same reason it may be supposed that the *Assyrians* attribute the flood to *Xisuthrus*, whom they supposed to be a King of *Assyria*; but the circumstances of the story as delivered by *Alexander Polyhistor*, and *Abydenus*, are such as make it clear to be only a remainder of the universal flood which happened in the time of *Noah*. So the *Thessalians* make *Prometheus* to be the *Protoclast*; the *Peloponnesians* *Phoroneus*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, whom *Phoronides* the Poet calls πατήρ ὅς ἐστιν ἀνθρώπων, the Father of mankind. This may be now the first way of corrupting the ancient tradition, by supposing all that was conveyed by it to have been acted among themselves. Which may be imputed partly to their ignorance of the state of their ancient times, and partly to their pride, lest they should seem to come behind others in matters of *Antiquity*.

Apud Cyril.c.
Julian. l. 1.

Strom. l. 1.

2. Another fountain of *Heathen Mythology*, was, the taking the *Idiom* of the *Oriental Languages* in a proper sense. For whether we suppose the ancient traditions were conveyed to them in the ancient *Hebrew* by the *Pelasgi*, or were delivered to them by the *Phœnicians*, or were fetched out of the *Scriptures* themselves (as some suppose, though improbably of *Homer* and some ancient *Poets*) yet all these several ways agreeing in this, that the traditions were *Oriental*, we thereby understand how much of their *Mythology* came by taking the *Hebrew* in a proper and literal sense without attending to the *Idiom* of the Tongue. From hence *Bochartus* hath ingeniously fetched many *Heathen Fables*. Thus when *Noah* is said to be אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה *Gen.* 9. 20. which in the *Idiom* of the *Hebrew* only signifies a husbandman, they took it in a proper sense for ὁ ἀνὴρ ὁ γεωργός, and thence *Saturn* who was the same with *Noah* (as will appear afterwards) is made by *Mythologists* the husband of *Rhea* which was the same with the *Earth*. So the *Gyants* making

making war against *Heaven*, was only a *Poetical adumbration* of the design at the building of *Babel*, whose *top* in the Scripture is said to reach *בשמים*, which in the *Hebrew* signifies only a *great height*; but to *aggrandize* the *Story*, was taken in the *literal interpretation*, that they attempted *Heaven*. So when they are said to fight against the *Gods*, *Bochartus* thinks it might be taken from that phrase of *Nimrod*, that he was a *mighty hunter*, לפני יהוה, before the Lord, we render it, but it sometimes signifies against the Lord. So what *Abydenus* saith of the *Gyants*, that they were ἐκ τῆς γῆς, *Apud Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 9.* those that came out of the earth, is supposed to be taken from that phrase, Gen. 10. 11. מן הארץ וצא è terra ipsa exiit. But far more likely and probable is that which learned men are generally agreed in concerning *Bacchus* his being born of *Jupiter's thigh*, which is only an expression of that *Hebraism* וצאי ירכי, wherein coming out of the thigh is a phrase for ordinary procreation.

3. A third way observable, is, the alteration of the names in the ancient tradition, and putting names of like importance to them in their own language. Thus *Jupiter* who was the same with *Cham*, was called Ζεύς ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς οὐρανῆς, as חם from חם, *fervere, incallescere.* Ἡρόδοτος δὲ Ἀγύπτου καλεῖται ὁ Ζεὺς, saith *Herodotus*; him whom the *Greeks* call Ζεύς, the *Egyptians* call *Cham*. So *Japheth*, whose memory was preserved under *Neptune*, to whose portion the *Islands* in the *Sea* fell, was called by the *Greeks* Ποσειδάων, which comes *Phaleg. l. 1.* (saith *Bochartus*) from the *Punick* פשיטן, which signifies large and broad, which is the very importance of the *Hebrew* יכרת, thence in allusion to the name, it is said, Gen. 9. 27. ופת אלהים ליטת, *God shall enlarge Japhet.* Thence the *Epithetes* of *Neptune* are εὐρύς, εὐρύς, εὐρύς, all equally alluding to the name *Japhet*. So Ἀπόλλων in the *Greek* is of the same importance with the *Hebr.* שר, *Dæmon*, from שר to destroy. Thence we read, Deut. 32. 17. they sacrificed לשרים to Devils. *Canaan* in the *Hebrew* signifies a Merchant; thence *Mercury*, under whom the memory of *Canaan* the son of *Cham* was preserved, is derived by many from מכר to sell. *Ceres*, which was the *Inventress* of *Agriculture*, from גרש which imports bread.

broad-corn. These and many others are produced by *Vossius*, *Heinsius*, *Becharius* and other learned men, which I insist not on, because my design is only *digitos ad fontes intendere*, and to make these handsome and probable conjectures, argumentative to our purpose, and to bind up these loose and scattering *observations* into some order and method, in which they have not yet appeared, nor been improved to that end which I make use of them for.

When the *Oriental phrases* were ambiguous and equivocal, they omitted that sense which was plain and obvious, and took that which was more strange and fabulous. From hence the learned *Becharius* hath fetched the *Fable* of the *golden Fleece*, which was nothing else but the *robbing the Treasury* of the *King of Colchis*; but it was disguised under the name of the *golden Fleece*, because the *Syrack word* כֶּסֶף signifies both a *Fleece* and a *Treasury*. So the *Bulls* and *Dragons* which kept it, were nothing but the *mills* and *brass gates*; for שַׁר signifies both a *Bull* and a *Wall*, and נחש *Brass* and a *Dragon*. And to the *Fable* of the *Brass-Bull* in the mountain *Atabyrius* which foretold calamities, arose from the *equivocation* of the *Phanician* or *Hebrew words* אֱלִיף טַנְחַשׁ which signify either *Doctor Augur*, or *Los ex ore*, a *foreteller of events* or a *brazen Bull*. From the like ambiguity of the word אֶלְסִיָּא arose the *Fable* of *Jupiter stealing Europa* in the form of a *Bull*, because the word either signifies a *Ship* in which he conveyed her away, or a *Bull*; or it may be the *Ship* had *Sæva vox*, as the *ship St. Paul* sailed in had *Castor and Pollux*, it being usual to call their *Ships* by the names of the signs they carried. From the like *equivocation* in the *Phanician* language doth *Becharius* fetch many other *Heathen Fables*, in his excellent piece de *Phaniciæ Colonis*, as particularly that of *Arethusa* coming from *Alpheus*, which was from אֶלְפִּי a *Ship*, because it was not far from an excellent *Haven*. And so he makes the *Chimæra* to be more than a meer *ens rationis*; for he takes the *Chimæra* which *Bellerophon* conquered, to be only the people of *Solyri* under the three Generals, *Atys*, *Trochis*, and *Arfalus*; אֶרִי that signifies a *Lion*; *Trochis* was ראשׁ הַיָּם the head of a *Serpent*: *Arfalus* was אֶרֶץ a young

*Canaan. l. 1.
c. 28.*

Canaan. l. 1. c. 6

a young kid, and so the *Chimara* consisted of the form of a *Lyon*, a *Goat*, and a *Serpent*. Thus we see how easie a matter it was to advance the *Heathen Mythology* from the equivocation of the *Oriental Languages*, in which their *Traditions* were conveyed to them.

But yet a more prolifick principle of *Mythology* was by attributing the actions of several persons to one who was the first or the chief of them. Thus it was in the stories of *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, *Mars*, *Mercury*, *Minerva*, *Juno*, *Bacchus* and *Hercules*, which were a collection of the actions done by a multitude of persons, which were all attributed to one person. So *Vossius* tells us before the time of the *Tro-* Sect. 6.
5.
jan Wars, most of their *Kings*, who were renowned and powerful, were called *Joves*. Now when the actions of all these are attributed to one *Jupiter of Crete*, they must needs swell his story up with abundance of *Fables*. *Vossius* hath taken a great deal of pains to digest in an historical manner the stories of the several *Jupiters*, whereof he reckons two *Argives*, a third the Father of *Hercules*, a fourth a King of *Phrygia*, and two more of *Crete*; to one of which, without any distinction, the actions of all the rest were ascribed, and who was worshipped under the name of *Jupiter*. And so besides the ancient *Neptune*, who was the same with *Japhet*, they sometimes understood any *Insular Prince*, or one that had great power at *Sea*; but besides these, there were two famous *Neptunes* among the *Greeks*, the one of *Athens*, the other the builder of the walls of *Troy*: now the stories of all these being mixed together, must needs make a strange confusion. So for *Mars*, besides that ancient one they had by the *Oriental tradition*, they had a *Spartan*, *Thracian*, and *Arcadian Mars*. What abundance of *Mercuries* are we Cicero l. 3. de
Natur. D.
told of by *Tully*? and of no less than five *Minerva's*? Every angry, scornfull jealous *Queen* would fill up the *Fables* of *Juno*, who was equally claimed by the *Argives* and *Samians*. What contests were there between the *Greeks* and *Egyptians* concerning the Country of *Bacchus*, or *Liber Pater*, whose story was made up of many patches of the *Oriental story*, as will appear afterwards. The same may be said of *Hercules*. Now what a strange way was this to increase the

Steph. V.
"ΑΒΡΑΗΜ.

number of *Fables* ? when they had *one* whose memory was anciently preserved among them, they attributed the *actions* of all such to him, who came near him in that which his memory was most remarkable for : And in those things which they did retain of the *Eastern tradition*, it was an usual thing to confound persons, places and actions together. So the story of *Enoch* and *Methuselah* is joyned together by *Stephanus de Urbibus*, under the name of "ΑΒΡΑΗΜ, who is there said to live above 300 years (which agrees with *Enoch* as the name doth) and that at his death the world should be destroyed by a *Flood* ; which agrees with *Methuselah*. So *Abraham* by *Orpheus* is called *μωυσαϊσμός*, which belongs to *Isaac* his Son ; so the actions of *Nimrod*, *Ninus* and *Cham*, are confounded together in their *Mythology*. By these several ways now we understand how the *original tradition* was by degrees corrupted and altered in the *Heathen Mythology*.

Sect. 7.

V. Scaliger.
not. infr. Gr.
Selden. de
Dñs Syris.
Bochart. Ca-
na. l. 2. c. 2.

I come now to the *footsteps* of *Scripture-history*, which notwithstanding these *corruptions*, may be discerned in the *Heathen Mythology*, which I shall methodically inquire after according to the *series* of *Scripture-history*. That the *names* given to *God* in *Scripture* were preserved among the *Phœnicians*, appears sufficiently by the remainders of the *Phœnician Theology*, translated by *Philo Byblius* out of *Sanchoniathon* ; wherein we read of the God *Ιωα*, which hath the same letters with *יהוה*, besides which there we meet with *ελιόν*, the same with *עליון*, the most *High*, and *יאל*, which is *אל*, the *strong God* ; *Beelsaman*, which is, *בעל שמים*, the *God of Heaven*, and *Ελσιμ*, the very name of *God* used in the beginning of *Genesis* so often. Besides, in those *fragments* we have express mention of the *Chaos*, and the *evening* following it, or the *darkness on the face of the Deep* ; the *Creation of Angels* under the *ζωσταντων*, *ציבה שמים*, those *beings* which contemplate the *Heavens* : and the *Creation of mankind*, *ἐκ τῆς κόλπης ἀνέκυε*, i. e. *יהוה פיו* saith *Bochartus*, the *voice of the mouth of God*, which is by *Gods word* and *inspiration*, when it is expressed that *God said*, *Let us make man*, and that he *breathed into him the breath of life*. After we read of *γέννησθαι* and *ἀντίχθων*, which properly agree to

to Adam, who was made out of the Earth. *Vossius* con- De Idol. l. 1.
cap. 3.
Tacit. de mo-
rib. German.
ceives that the memory of Adam was preserved among the
old Germans, of whom *Tacitus* speaks, *Celebrant antiquis*
carminibus Tuistonem Deum terra editum, & filium Man-
num, originem gentis, conditoresque. Either by *Tuisto* Adam
is understood, who was formed of the Earth, and by *Mannus*,
Noah: or by *Tuisto* God may be understood, and by *Mannus*,
Adam; to which conjecture may be added fur-
ther, that the same Author reports that some of the Ger-
mans sacrificed to *Isis*, which *Vossius* likewise conceives to be
a remainder of the Hebrew *Ischa*. And so among the *Egy-*
ptians it is with like probability conceived that *Adam* and
Ischa were preserved under *Osiris* and *Isis*, as they were hi-
storically taken. In *Cilicia*, the City *Adana* is thought to
have some remainder of the name of *Adam*; for the *Greeks*
had no termination in *M*. therefore for *Adam* they pro-
nounced it *Adan*, and that from *Ἀδανός*, and so the City
Adana: Now that *Ἀδανός* by *Stephanus de Urbibus*, is said
to be the Son of Heaven and Earth. *Ἐστὶ δὲ Ἀδανός υἱὸς τοῦ* Stephanus V.
Ἀδανᾶ.
κελευθῆρος. This *Adannus*, he tells us, was otherwise called
Κελύθ or *Saturn*, under whom the *Greeks* preserved the
memory of *Adam*; for *Diodorus*, *Thallus*, *Cassius*, *Severus*,
and *Cornelius Nepos*, do all (as *Tertullian* saith) confess
Saturn to have been a man; and according to their *Fables*,
he must have been the first of men. *Saturn* was the Son of
Heaven and Earth, and so was *Adam*: he taught men
Husbandry; and was not *Adam* the first that tilled the
ground? Besides, that power which *Saturn* had, and was
deposed from, doth fitly set out the *Dominion* man had in
the *Golden Age of Innocency* which he lost by his own folly.
And *Adams* hiding himself from the presence of the Lord,
gave occasion to the name of *Saturn*, from *Satar* to hide.
We find something of *Cain* preserved in the *Phœnician an-*
tiquities, under the name of *Αγένης* or *Αγέτης*, the first
Countryman or Husbandman, who with his brother *Αγές*
built houses, and the first foundation of a City is attributed
to *Cain*: and on that account *Vossius* conjectures that the
memory of *Cains* wife was preserved under *Vesta*, both be- Voss. de Idol.
l. 1. c. 17.
cause she was the daughter of *Saturn*, i.e. of *Adam*, and

that she is said *ἡ ἀρχὴ κατασκευῆς οἰκῶν* *ἐπεὶ*, to find out first the way of building houses. That Tubal-Cain gave first occasion to the name and worship of *Vulcan*, hath been very probably conceived, both from the very great affinity of the names, and that *Tubal-Cain* is expressly mentioned to be an Instructor of every Artificer in brass and iron; and as near relation as *Apollo* had to *Vulcan*, *Jubal* had to *Tubal-Cain*, who was the Inventer of *Musick*, or the Father of all such as handle the *Harp* and *Organ*; which the *Greeks* attribute to *Apollo*. And if that be true which *Genebrard* and others ascribe to *Naamah*, the sister of *Jubal* and *Tubal-Cain*, viz. that she was the inventor of *Spinning* and *Weaving*, then may she come in for *Minerva*. Thus we see there were some, though but obscure footsteps preserved, even of that part of *Scripture-history* which preceeded the Flood.

Sett. 8. The memory of the Deluge it self we have already found to be preserved in the *Heathen Mythology*; we come therefore to *Noah* and his posterity. Many parcels of *Noahs* memory were preserved in the scattered fragments of many Fables, under *Saturn*, *Janus*, *Prometheus*, and *Bacchus*. *Bochartus* insists on no fewer than 14 *Parallels* between *Noah* and the *Heathen Saturn*, which he saith are so plain, that there is no doubt but under *Saturn*, *Noah* was understood in the *Heathen Mythology*. *Saturn* was said to be the common Parent of *Mankind*, so was *Noah*; *Saturn* was a just King, *Noah* not only righteous himself, but a Preacher of righteousness; The golden Age of *Saturn* was between *Noah* and the dispersion of *Nations*. In *Noahs* time all mankind had but one *Language*, which the *Heathens* extend under *Saturn*, both to men and beasts: The plantation of *Vines* attributed to *Saturn* by the *Heathens*, as to *Noah* by the *Scriptures*: The Law of *Saturn* mentioned by the *Poets*, that none should see the nakedness of the *Gods* without punishment, seems to respect the fact and curse of *Cham*, in reference to *Noah*, *Saturn* and *Rhea*, and those with them are said to be born of *Thetis*, or the *Ocean*, which plainly alludes to *Noah* and his companies escaping the Flood; thence a ship was the symbol of *Saturn*; and that *Saturn* devoured all his.

Phaleg, l. 1.
c. 1.

his children seems to be nothing else but the destruction of the old world by Noahs flood. And not only under Saturn, but under Prometheus too was Noahs memory preserved. *Diodor. Biblioth. l. 1.* *rus* speaks of the great flood under Prometheus; and Prometheus implies one that hath forecast and wisdom, such as Noah had, whereby he foretold the flood and was saved in it, when others were Epimetheus's that had not wit to prevent their own destruction.

And no wonder if Prometheus were Noah, that the forming mankind was attributed to him, when the world was peopled from him. Herodotus his saying that Asia was Prometheus his wife, might relate to the Country Noah lived in and our propagation from thence. Another part of Noahs memory was preserved under Janus; the name of Janus is most probably derived from *Jan* because of Noahs planting a Vine, and Janus was called *Conservius*, saith Macrobius, à *conserendo*, *hoc est à propagine generis humani quæ Jano autore conseritur*; *V. Mayer.* now to whom can this be so properly applyed as to Noah *Philol. sacr. p. 2. c. 5.* ing *bifrons* or looking *πρὸς αὐτὸ καὶ ὀπίσσω* forward and backward, is not so fit an emblem of any thing as of Noahs seeing those two ages before and after the flood. And it is further observable which Plutarch speaks of in his *Roman questions*, that the ancient coins had on one side the image of Janus with his two faces, on the other *πλοῖε πρὸ μναν ἢ πρὸ ἔραν ἡ δὲ χεῖρα ἀπὸ τοῦ πλοῦ*, the fore or hinder part of a ship, by which the memory of the Ark of Noah seems to have been preserved. Thus we see what Analogy there is in the story of Janus with that of Noah: not that I give credit to those fooleries which tell us of Noahs coming from Palestine with his son Japhet into Italy and planting Colonies there, for which we are beholdiag to the spurious *Ethruscan Antiquities*; but all that I assert, is, that the story of Noah might be preserved in the eldest Colonies, though disguised under other names, as here in the case of Janus. And on the same account that the name of Janus is attributed to Noah, some likewise believe him to have been the most ancient Bacchus who was according to Diodorus *εὐγενὴς τῆς ἀμπέλης*, the first planter of Vines and instructor of men in making Wines; and besides. *Biblioth.*

Bacchus his being twice born, seems only an adumbration of *Noah's* preservation after the flood, which might be accounted a second *nativity* when the rest of the world was destroyed ; and withall *Philostratus* in the life of *Apollonius* relates that the ancient *Indian Bacchus* came thither out of *Assyria*, which yet more fully agrees with *Noah*. So that from these scattered members of *Hippolytus* and these broken fragments of traditions, we may gather almost an entire history of all the passages concerning *Noah*.

Sect. 9.

Voss. de Idol.
l. 1. c. 18.
Boch. Phaleg.
l. 1. c. 1. cap. 2.

De Idol. l. 1.
c. 16.

As the story of *Saturn* and *Noah* do much agree, so the three sons of *Noah* and those of *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, and *Pluto* have their peculiar resemblances to each other. Of which *Vossius* and *Bochartus* have largely spoken, and we have touched on already. Besides which this latter author hath carried the parallel lower, and finds *Canaan* the son of *Cham*, the same with *Mercury* the son of *Jupiter* ; as it was the curse of *Canaan* to be a servant of servants, so *Mercury* is always described under servile employments ; his wings seem to be the ships of the *Phœnicians* who were derived from *Canaan*, and his being the God of trade noting the great merchandize of the *Phœnicians*, and *Mercuries* theevery noting the *Pyracies*, or at least the subtilty and craft of the *Phœnicians* ; he was the Father of eloquence and *Astronomy*, as letters and *Astronomy* came from the *Phœnicians* into *Greece*. The same author parallels *Nimrod* and *Bacchus*, and *Magog* and *Prometheus* together. The name of *Bacchus* is but a light variation of *ברכוש Bar-chus*, as *Nimrod* was the son of *Chus*, and *Bacchus* is called *Nebrodes* by the *Greeks*, which is the very name of *Nimrod* among them, and *Bacchus* is called *Ζεγγεξ*, which excellently interprets *Nimrod's* being a mighty hunter. *Bacchus* his expeditions into *India* were the attempts of *Nimrod* and the *Assyrian Emperors*. On which account *Vossius* makes *Nimrod* or *Belus* the most ancient *Mars* ; for *Hestius Milesius* speaks of *Enyalius* which is *Mars*, his being in *Sennaar* of *Babylonia*. That the memory of *Magog* was preserved under *Prometheus*, these things make it probable, that *Magog* was the son of *Japhet*, as *Prometheus* of *Iapetus*, and that the posterity of *Magog* was placed about *Caucasus*, where *Prometheus* is feigned

feigned to lie: and the eating of *Prometheus* his heart is only an interpretation of *כאב* which applied to the heart signifies to waste away and be consumed. Thus far *Bochartus*.

The *Phœnician antiquities* seem to have preserved the memory of *Abrahams* sacrificing his son *Isaac*, by that place which *Eusebius* produceth out of *Porphyries* book concerning the *Jews*; where he relates, how *Saturn* whom the *Phœnicians* call *Israel*, when he reigned in those parts, and had an only son called *Jeoud* of a *Nymph* called *Anobret*, being under V. Scaliger. some great calamity, did sacrifice that son of his being cloathed not. ad fr. Gr. with a royal habit. Here we have a royal person called

Israel; and that *Abraham* should be accounted a *King* in those elder times, is nothing strange, considering his wealth, and what petty royalties there were in those times. But *Grotius*, and from him *Vossius*, do not think that *Abraham* was here called *Israel*, but that the transcriber of *Eusebius* meeting with *א* supposed it to be a contraction of *אֱיִסְרָאֵל*, and so writ it at length. It must be acknowledged that *א* is used in the *Phœnician Theology* for *Saturn*, but yet the circumstances of the story make the ordinary reading not improbable; neither is it strange, that *Abraham* should be called by the name of the people which he was the Progenitor of. That *Isaac* should be meant by his only son called *Jeoud* is most likely; for when *God* bids *Abraham* go sacrifice him, he saith, Take thy son *יְהוֹד* thy only son; *Jehid* is the same with the *Phœnician Jeoud*. That *Sara* is meant by *Anobret*, the original of the name implies, which is as *Bochartus* derives it *אֲנוֹבֶרֶת* *Annobereſt*, that is, *ex gratia concipiens*, which the *Apostle* explains, *Through faith Sara her self received strength to conceive seed*. Now all the difference is, that which was only designed and intended by *Abraham*, was believed by the *Phœnicians* as really done, that it might be as a president to them for their *αὐτοκατοδοσία*, sacrificing of men, a thing so much in use among the *Phœnicians*, and all the Colonies derived from them, as many learned men have at large shewed. But besides this, there are particular testimonies concerning *Abraham*, his age, wisdom and knowledge, his coming out of *Chaldea*, and the propagation of knowledge from him among the *Chaldeans*, *Phœnicians*, and *Egyptians*;

Grot. in Deut.
c. 18. v. 10.
Voss. de Idol.
l. 1. c. 18.

Gen. 22. 1.

De Phœnic.
col. l. 2. c. 2.
Heb. 11. 11.

Joseph. Antiq. l. 1. c. 7. *Egyptians*, are extant out of *Berosus*, *Eupolemus*, and others in *Josephus* and *Eusebius*, and from thence transcribed by many learned men, which on that account I forbear transcribing as being common and obvi-
Euseb. Prep. Evang. l. 9. c. 16.

Secl. 10. Some have not improbably conjectured, that the memory of *Jacob's* long peregrination, and service with his *Uncle Laban*, was preserved under the story of *Apollo's* banishment and being a *Shepherd* under *Admetus*.

Callimach. Hymn. in Apollo. For *Callimachus* reports that *Love* was the cause of *Apollo's* travails, as it was of *Jacob's*, and withall mentions a strange increase of *Cattle* under *Apollo's* care, answerable to what the *Scripture* reports concerning *Jacob*. But it is more certain, that the memory of *Jacob's* setting up the stone he had rested on for a

Gen. 28. 18. pillar, and pouring oyl upon it, and calling the place *Bethel*, was preserved under the anointed stones which the *Phœnicians* from *Bethel* called Βυτύλια, as hath been frequently observed by learned men; from whence came the custom of anointing stones among the *Heathens*, of which so very many have largely discoursed. Thence the Proverb of a superstitious man, πάντα λίθον λιπαρὲν προσκυνεῖ, which *Arno-*

Scalig. not. infr. Gr. Bochart. *binius* calls lubricatum lapidem & ex olivi unguine sordidatum. It seems the anointing the stones with oyl, was then the symbol of the consecration of them. The name Βαῖτυλα, for such a stone occurs in *Hesychius*, the Greek *Erymolo-*

Can. l. 2. c. 2. *Seld. de Diis Syris.* *V. Heins. in Clem. Alex. Str. 7.* *Casaub. ad Theoph. p. 295.* *Herald. ad Arnob. l. 1.* *Colvium ad Apul. Florid.* *Ouzel. & Elmenhorst. ad Minuci. De Idol. l. 1. c. 29.* gift, *Damascius* in *Photius* and others. That the memory of *Joseph* in *Egypt* was preserved under the *Egyptian*

Apis, hath been shewed with a great deal of probability by the learned *Vossius*, in his often cited piece of *Idolatry*, from the testimonies of *Julius Maternus*, *Rufinus*, and *Suidas*; and from these three arguments. 1. The greatness of the benefit which the *Egyptians* received by *Joseph*; which was of that nature that it could not easily be forgot, and that no symbol was so proper to set it out as the *Egyptian* *Apis*; because the famine was portended by lean Kine, and the plenty by fat; and *Minucius* at *Rome* for relieving the people in a time of famine, had a statue of a golden Bull erected to his memory. 2. The *Egyptians* were not backward to testify their respect to *Joseph*, as appears by *Pharaoh's* rewarding him; now it was the custom of the *Egyptians*

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to preserve the *memories* of their great Benefactors by some *symbols* to *posterity*; which were at first intended only for a *civil use*, although they were after abused to *Superstition* and *Idolatry*. 3. From the names of *Apis* and *Serapis*. *Apis* he conceives to be the sacred name of *Joseph* among the *Egyptians*, and is as much as אב Father; so *Joseph* himself saith he was as a *Father* to *Pharaoh*. And *Serapis*, as *Rufinus* and *Suidas* both tell us, had a *busnel* upon his *head*, and *Serapis* is probably derived from שור *for*, which signifies a *Bull*, and *Apis*. So that by this means the story of *Joseph* is attested by the *Egyptians* *superstitions*, of which they can give no account so likely as this is. Gen. 45. 8.

Many things concerning *Moses* are preserved in the story of *Bacchus*, not that from thence we are to conclude that *Moses* was the *Bacchus* of the *Greeks*, as *Vossius* thinks, but they took several parts of the *Eastern traditions* concerning him, which they might have from the *Phœnicians* who came with *Cadmus* into *Greece*, while the memory of *Moses* was yet fresh among the *Canaanites*. In the story of *Bacchus* as *Vossius* observes, it is expressly said that he was born in *Egypt*, and that soon after his birth he was put in an *Ark*, and exposed to the *River*, which tradition was preserved among the *Brasidae* of *Laconica*: and *Bacchus* in *Orpheus* is called *Mions*, and by *Plutarch* de *Iside & Osiride*, *Palestinus*: and he is called Βιουτωρ, which agrees to *Moses*, who besides his own Mother was adopted by *Pharaohs* daughter: *Bacchus* was likewise commended for his *beauty* as *Moses* was, and was said to be educated in a mount of *Arabia* called *Nysa*, which agrees with *Moses* his residence in *Arabia* forty years; so *Plutarch* mentions φυγὰς Διονύσου the *bannishments* of *Bacchus*, and *Nonnus* mentions *Bacchus* his flight into the *red Sea*: who likewise mentions his battles in *Arabia* and with the neighbouring *Princes* there. *Diodorus* saith, that *Bacchus* his Army had not only men but women in it; which is most true of the company which *Moses* led. *Orpheus* calls *Bacchus* θεσμοφύτης, and attributes to him δῖπλωνα θεσμὸν, whereby we understand *Moses* his being a *Legislator*, and that he delivered the *Law* in two *Tables*. *Moses* his fetching water out of a rock with his rod, is preserved

Gen. 45. 8.

Seft. I I.

De Idol. l. I. c.

30.

Dion. l. 20.

Bibl. l. 4.

served in the *Orgia* of *Bacchus*, in which *Euripides* relates that *Agave* and the rest of the *Bacchæ* celebrating the *Orgia*, one of them touched a rock and the water came out: and in the same *Orgia* *Euripides* reports how they were wont to crown their heads with *Serpents*, probably in memory of the cure of the fiery *Serpents* in the wilderness. A dog is made the companion of *Bacchus*, which is the signification of *Caleb*, who so faithfully adhered to *Moses*. To these and some other circumstances insisted on by *Vossius*, *Bochartus* adds two more very considerable ones; which are, that *Nonnus* reports of *Bacchus* that he touched the two rivers *Orontes* and *Hydaspes* with his *thyrsus* or rod, and that the rivers dried, and he passed through them: and that his *Ivy staffe* being thrown upon the ground crept up and down like a *Serpent*, and that the *Indians* were in darkness while the *Bacchæ* enjoyed light; which circumstances considered will make every one that hath judgement say as *Bochartus* doth; *ex mirabili illo consensu vel cæcis apparebit præscos fabularum architectos è scriptoribus sacris multa esse mutatos*. From this wonderful agreement of *Heathen Mythology* with the *Scriptures*, it cannot but appear that one is a corruption of the other. That the memory of *Joshua* and *Sampson* was preserved under *Hercules Tyrius*, is made likewise very probable from several circumstances of the stories. Others have deduced the many rites of *Heathen worship*, from those used in the *Tabernacle* among the *Jews*. Several others might be insisted on, as the *Parallel* between *Og* and *Typho*, and between the old *Silenus* and *Balaam*, both noted for their skill in divination, both taken by the water, Num. 22. 5. both noted for riding on an *Ass*: τῶν ὄντων τὰ πολλὰ ὀχέουσι, saith *Lucian* of the old *Silenus*; and that which makes it yet more probable, is that of *Pausanias*, ἐν γὰρ τῇ Εὐεργέτων χώρα Σιλυνὸς μνημα, which some learned men have been much puzzled to find out the truth of; and this conjecture which I here propound, may pass at least for a probable account of it; but I shall no longer insist on these things, having I suppose, done what is sufficient to our purpose, which is to make it appear what footsteps there are of the truth of *Scripture-history* amidst all the corruptions of *Heathen Mythology*.

Canaan. l. 1.
c. 18.

De Idol. l. 1. c.
26. p. 188.
p. 169.

De Deor. Conc.
Eliacōv. 2.
p. 203.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Excellency of the Scriptures.

Concerning matters of pure divine revelation in Scripture : the terms of Salvation only contained therein. The ground of the disesteem of the Scriptures is racite unbelief. The Excellency of the Scriptures manifested as to the matters which God hath revealed therein. The excellency of the discoveries of Gods nature which are in Scripture. Of the goodness and love of God in Christ. The suitableness of those discoveries of God to our natural notions of a Deity. The necessity of Gods making known himself to us in order to the regulating our conceptions of him. The Scriptures give the fullest account of the state of mens souls, and the corruptions which are in them. The only way of pleasing God discovered in Scriptures. The Scriptures contain matters of greatest mysteriousness , and most universal satisfaction to mens minds. The excellency of the manner wherein things are revealed in Scriptures, in regard of clearness, authority, purity, uniformity, and perswasiveness. The excellency of the Scriptures as a rule of life. The nature of the duties of Religion and the reasonableness of them. The greatness of the encouragements to Religion contained in the Scriptures. The great excellency of the Scriptures , as containing in them the Covenant of Grace in order to mans Salvation.

HAVING thus largely proved the Truth of all those *passages of sacred Scripture* which concern the history of the first ages of the world, by all those arguments which a subject of that nature is capable of, the only thing left in order to our full proving the *Divinity of the Scriptures*, is, the consideration of those matters contained in it, which are in an especial manner said to be of *Divine Revelation*. For those historical *passages*, though we believe them as contained in the *Scripture*, to have been *Divinely inspired* as well as others: yet they are such things as supposing no *Divine Revelation*, might have been known sufficiently to the world,

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had not men been wanting to themselves as to the care and means of preserving them; but those *matters* which I now come to discourse of, are of a more *sublime* and *transcendent* nature, such as it had been impossible for the *minds* of men to reach, had they not been immediately discovered by *God* himself. And those are the *terms* and *conditions* on which the soul of man may upon good grounds expect an *eternal happiness*, which we assert the *book* of *Scriptures* to be the only *authentick* and *infallible records* of. Men might by the *improvements* of reason and the *sagacity* of their minds discover much, not only of the *lapsed condition* of their souls, and the necessity of a *purgation* of them in order to their *felicity*, but might in the general know what things are pleasing and *acceptable* to the *Divine nature*, from those *differences* of good and evil which are unalterably fixed in the things themselves; but which way to obtain any certainty of the *remission* of *sins*, to recover the *Grace* and *Favour* of *God*, to enjoy perfect *tranquillity* and *peace* of *conscience*, to be able to please *God* in things agreeable to his will, and by these to be assured of *eternal blifs*, had been impossible for men to have ever found, had not *God* himself been graciously pleased to reveal them to us. Men might still have bewildred themselves in following the *ignes fatui* of their own *imaginations*, and hunting up and down the world for a path which leads to *Heaven*, but could have found none, unless *God* himself taking pity of the wandrings of men had been pleased to hang out a *light* from *Heaven* to direct them in their way thither, and by this *Pharos* of *Divine Revelation* to direct them so to *steer* their course, as to escape splitting themselves on the *rocks* of open impieties, or being swallowed up in the *quicksands* of terrene delights. Neither doth he shew them only what *shelves* and *rocks* they must escape, but what particular *course* they must *steer*, what *star* they must have in their eye, what *compass* they must observe, what *winds* and *gales* they must expect and pray for, if they would at last arrive at *eternal blifs*. *Eternal blifs*! What more could a *God* of infinite *goodness* promise, or the *soul* of man ever wish for? A *Reward* to such who are so far from *deserving*, that they are still *provoking*; *Glory*

to

to such who are more apt to be *ashamed* of their duties, than of their offences ; but that it should not only be a *glorious reward*, but *eternal* too, is that which though it infinitely *transcend* the *deserts* of the *receivers*, yet it highly discovers the *infinite goodness* of the *Giver*. But when we not only know that there is so rich a *mine* of inestimable *treasures*, but if the *owner* of it undertakes to shew us the way to it, and give us certain and infallible directions how to come to the full *possession* of it, how much are we in *love* with *misery*, and do we *court* our own *ruine*, if we neglect to hearken to his *directions*, and *observe* his *commands* !

This is that we are now undertaking to make good concerning the *Scriptures*, that these alone contain those *sacred discoveries* by which the *souls* of men may come at last to enjoy a compleat and *eternal happiness*. One would think there could be nothing more needless in the world than to bid men regard their own *welfare*, and to *seek* to be *happy* ; yet whoever casts his *eye* into the world, will find no counsel so little *hearkned* to as this, nor any thing which is more generally looked on as a matter *trivial* and *impertinent*. Which cannot arise but from one of these two grounds, that either they think it no great *wisdom* to let go their present hold as to the *good things* of this world, for that which they secretly question whether they shall ever live to see or no ; or else that their *minds* are in *suspense*, whether they be not sent on a *Guiana voyage* to *Heaven*, whether the *certainty* of it be yet fully discovered, or the *instructions* which are given be such as may infallibly conduct them thither. The first, though it hath the *advantage* of *sense*, *fruition*, *delight*, and further *expectation* ; yet to a *rational* person who seriously *reflects* on himself, and sums up what (after all his troubles and *disquietments* in the procuring, his *cares* in keeping, his *disappointments* in his *expectations*, his *fears* of losing what he doth enjoy, and that *vexation* of *spirit* which attends all these) he hath gained of true *contentment* to his mind, can never certainly believe that ever these things were intended for his *happiness*. For is it possible that the *soul* of man should ever enjoy its full and compleat *happiness* in this world, when nothing is able to make it *happy*, but what is

most *suitable* to its nature, able to fill up its large capacity, and *commensurate* with its duration : but in this life the matter of mens greatest *delights* is strangely unsuitable to the nature of our *rational beings*, the *measure* of them too short for our vast *desires* to *stretch* themselves upon ; the *proportion* too scant and narrow to run parallel with *immortality*. It must be then only a *Supream*, *Infinite* and *Eternal Being*, which by the free *communications* of his *bounty* and *goodness* can fix and satiate the souls desires, and by the constant flowings forth of his uninterrupted streams of favour will always keep up desire, and yet always satisfy it : One whose *goodness* can only be felt by some transient *touches* here, whose *love* can be seen but as through a *lattice*, whose constant presence may be rather wished for than enjoyed, who hath reserved the full sight and fruition of himself to that future *state* when all these dark *veils* shall be done away, and the *soul* shall be continually *sunning* her self under immediate *beams* of *light* and *love*. But how or in what way the soul of *man* in this degenerate condition should come to be partaker of so great a *happiness*, by the enjoyment of that *God* our natures are now at such a distance from, is the greatest and most important enquiry of humane nature ; and we continually see how *successless* and *unsatisfactory* the endeavours of those have been to themselves at last, who have sought for this *happiness* in a way of their own finding out ; The large *volume* of the Creation, wherein *God* hath described so much of his *wisdom* and *power*, is yet too dark and obscure, too short and imperfect to set forth to us the *way* which leads to eternal happiness. Unless then the same *God* who made mens *souls* at first, do shew them the way for their recovery ; as they are in a degenerate, so they will be in a desperate *condition* ; but the same *bounty* and *goodness* of *God*, which did at first display it self in giving being to mens *souls*, hath in a higher manner enlarged the discovery of it self, by making known the *way* whereby we may be taken into his *Grace* and *Favour* again.

Which

Which it now concerns us particularly to discover, thereby to make it appear that this way is of that peculiar excellency, that we may have from thence the greatest evidence, it could come from no other Author but *God* himself, and doth tend to no other end but our eternal happiness. Now that incomparable excellency which is in the sacred Scriptures, will fully appear, if we consider the matters contained in them under this threefold capacity. 1. As matters of *Divine Revelation*. 2. As a rule of life. 3. As containing that *Covenant of grace* which relates to mans eternal happiness.

1. Consider the Scripture generally, as containing in it matters of *divine revelation*, and therein the excellency of the Scriptures appears in two things. 1. The matters which are revealed, 2. The manner wherein they are revealed.

1. The matters which are revealed in Scripture, may be considered these three ways. 1. As they are matters of the greatest weight and moment. 2. As matters of the greatest depth and mysteriousness. 3. As matters of the most universal satisfaction to the minds of men.

1. They are matters of the greatest moment and importance for men to know. The wisdom of men is most known by the weight of the things they speak; and therefore that wherein the wisdom of *God* is discovered, cannot contain any thing that is mean and trivial; they must be matters of the highest importance, which the Supreme Ruler of the world vouchsafes to speak to men concerning: And such we shall find the matters which *God* hath revealed in his word to be, which either concern the rectifying our apprehensions of his nature, or making known to men their state and condition, or discovering the way whereby to avoid eternal misery. Now which is there of these three, which supposing *God* to discover his mind to the world, it doth not highly become him to speak to men of?

1. What is there which doth more highly concern men to know than *God* himself? or what more glorious and excellent object could he discover than himself to the world? There is nothing certainly which should more commend the

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Scriptures to us, than that thereby we may grow more acquainted with *God*; that we may know more of his *nature*, and all his *perfections*, and many of the great *reasons* of his actings in the world. We may by them understand with safety what the *eternal purposes* of *God* were as to the way of mans recovery by the *death* of his *Son*; we may there see and understand the great *wisdom* of *God*; not only in the contrivance of the world, and ordering of it, but in the gradual *revelations* of himself to his people, by what steps he trained up his *Church* till the *fulness of time* was come; what his aim was in laying such a load of *Ceremonies* on his people of the *Jews*; by what *steps* and *degrees* he made way for the full *revelation* of his *Will* to the *World* by speaking in these *last days* by his *Son*, after he had spoke at *sundry times* and *divers manners* by the *Prophets*, &c. unto the *Fathers*. In the *Scriptures* we read the most rich and admirable *discoveries* of *Divine goodness*, and all the ways and methods he useth in alluring sinners to himself, with what *Majesty* he commands, with what *condescension* he intreats, with what *importunity* he woos mens souls to be reconciled to him, with what *favour* he embraceth, with what *tenderness* he chastiseth, with what *bowels* he pitieth those who have chosen him to be their *God*! With what *power* he supporteth, with what *wisdom* he directeth, with what *cordials* he refresheth the souls of such who are dejected under the *sense* of his displeasure, and yet their *love* is *sincere* towards him! With what profound *humility*, what holy *boldness*, what *becoming distance*, and yet what *restless importunity* do we therein find the *souls* of *Gods* people addressing themselves to him in *prayer*! With what *cheerfulness* do they serve him, with what *confidence* do they trust him, with what *resolution* do they adhere to him in all *streights* and *difficulties*, with what *patience* do they submit to his *Will* in their greatest extremities! How *fearful* are they of *sinning* against *God*, how *careful* to please him, how *regardless* of *suffering*, when they must choose either that or *sinning*, how little apprehensive of mens displeasure, while they enjoy the favour of *God*! Now all these things which are so fully and pathetically expressed in *Scripture*, do abundantly set forth to us
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the exuberancy and Pleonasm of God's grace and goodness towards his people, which makes them delight so much in him, and be so sensible of his displeasure. But above all other discoveries of Gods goodness, his sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, is that which the Scripture sets forth with the greatest Life and Eloquence. By Eloquence, I mean not an artificial composure of words, but the gravity, weight, and perswasiveness of the matter contained in them. And what can tend more to melt our frozen hearts into a current of thankfull obedience to God, than the vigorous reflection of the beams of Gods love through Jesus Christ upon us? Was there ever so great an expression of Love heard of! nay, was it possible to be imagined, that that God who perfectly hates sin, should himself offer the pardon of it, and send his Son into the world to secure it to the sinner, who doth so heartily repent of his sins, as to deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Christ! Well might the Apostle say, *This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation,* 1 Tim. 1. 15. *that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.* How dry and sapless are all the voluminous discourses of Philosophers, compared with this Sentence! How jejune and unsatisfactory are all the discoveries they had of God and his goodness, in comparison of what we have by the Gospel of Christ! Well might Paul then say, *That he determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified.* Christ crucified is the Library which triumphant souls will be studying in to all Eternity. This is the only Library which is the true *ταρσεύς*, that which cures the soul of all its maladies and distempers; other knowledge makes mens minds giddy and flatulent; this settles and composes them; other knowledge is apt to swell men into high conceits and opinions of themselves; this brings them to the truest view of themselves, and thereby to humility and sobriety; Other knowledge leaves mens hearts as it found them; this alters them and makes them better. So transcendent an excellency is there in the knowledge of Christ crucified above the sublimest speculations in the world.

And is not this an inestimable benefit we enjoy by the Scripture, that therein we can read and converse with all

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these expressions of *God's love and goodness*, and that in his own *language* ? Shall we admire and praise what we meet with in *Heathen Philosophers*, which is generous and handsome ; and shall we not adore the infinite *fulness* of the *Scriptures*, which run over with continued *expressions* of that and a higher nature ? What *folly* is it to magnifie those *lean kine*, the notions of *Philosophers*, and to contemn the *fat*, the *plenty* and *fulness* of the *Scriptures* ? If there be not far more *valuable* and *excellent discoveries* of the *Divine Nature* and *Perfections* ; if there be not far more excellent *directions* and *rules of practice* in the *sacred Scriptures*, than in the *sublimest* of all the *Philosophers*, then let us leave our *full ears*, and feed upon the *thin*. But certainly no *sober* and *rational spirit* that puts any value upon the *knowledge* of *God*, but on the same *account* that he doth prize the *discourses* of any *Philosophers* concerning *God*, he cannot but set a value of a far higher nature on the *word* of *God*. And as the *goodness* of *God* is thus discovered in *Scripture*, so is his *Justice* and *Holiness* : we have therein recorded the most remarkable *judgements* of *God* upon contumacious sinners, the severest *denunciations* of a *judgement* to come against all that live in sin, the exactest *precepts* of *holiness* in the world ; and what can be desired more to discover the *Holiness* of *God*, than we find in *Scripture* concerning him ? If therefore acquaintance with the *nature*, *perfection*, *designs* of so excellent a *Being* as *God* is, be a thing desirable to humane nature, we have the greatest cause to admire the *excellency* and adore the *fulness* of the *Scriptures* which gives so large, rational, and compleat account of the *Being* and *Attributes* of *God*. And which tends yet more to commend the *Scriptures* to us, those things which the *Scripture* doth most fully discover concerning *God*, do not at all contradict those *prime* and *common notions* which are in our *natures* concerning him, but do exceedingly advance and improve them, and tend the most to regulate our *conceptions* and *apprehensions* of *God*, that we may not miscarry therein, as otherwise men are apt to doe. For it being natural to men so far to love *themselves*, as to set the greatest *value* upon those *excellencies* which they think themselves most masters of :
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thence men came to be exceedingly mistaken in their apprehensions of a *Deity*, some attributing *one* thing as a *perfection*, another a *different* thing, according to their *humors* and *inclinations*. Thus imperious self-willed men are apt to cry up *Gods* absolute power and dominion as his greatest *perfection*; easie and soft-spirited men his *patience* and *goodness*; severe and rigid men his *justice* and *severity*: every one according to his *humor* and *temper*, making his *God* of his own *complexion*: and not only so, but in things remote enough from being *perfections* at all, yet because they are such things as they prize and value, they suppose of necessity they must be in *God*, as is evident in the *Epicureans* *ἀταξία*, by which they exclude *providence*, as hath been already observed. And withall considering how very difficult it is for one who really believes that *God* is of a *pure*, *just*, and *holy* nature, and that he hath grievously offended him by his sins, to believe that this *God* will pardon him upon true *repentance*: It is thence necessary that *God* should make known himself to the world, to prevent our *misconceptions* of his nature, and to assure a *suspicious*, because *guilty* creature, how ready he is to pardon *iniquity*, *transgression*, and *sin*, to such as unfeignedly repent of their follies, and return unto himself. Though the light of *nature* may dictate much to us of the *benignity* and *goodness* of the *Divine Nature*, yet it is hard to conceive that that should discover further than *Gods* general *goodness* to such as please him: but no foundation can be gathered thence of his *readiness* to pardon *offenders*, which being an act of *grace*, must alone be discovered by his *Will*. I cannot think the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars* are such *itinerant Preachers*, as to unfold unto us the whole *Counsel* and *Will of God* in reference to mans acceptance with *God* upon *repentance*. It is not every *Star* in the *firmament* can do that which the *Star* once did to the *wise men*, lead them unto *Christ*. The *Sun* in the *Heavens* is no *Parelius* to the *Sun of righteousness*. The best *Astronomer* will never find the *day-star* from on high in the rest of his number: What *St. Austin* said of *Tullies* works, is true of the whole *Volume* of the *Creation*, There are *admirable things* to be found in them: but the name of

Christ is not legible there. The work of *Redemption* is not engraven on the works of *providence*; if it had, a particular divine revelation had been unnecessary, and the *Apostles* were sent on a needless errand, which the world had understood without their *Preaching*, viz. *That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to men their trespasses, and hath committed to them the Ministry of Reconciliation.* How was the word of reconciliation committed to them, if it were common to them with the whole frame of the world? and the *Apostles* *Quare* elsewhere might have been easily answered, *How can men hear without a Preacher?* For then they might have known the way of *salvation*, without any special messengers sent to deliver it to them. I grant that *Gods* long-suffering and *patience* is intended to lead men to *repentance*, and that some general collections might be made from *providence* of the *placability* of *Gods* nature, and that *God* never left himself without a witness of his *goodness* in the world, being kind to the unthankfull, and doing good, in giving rain and fruitfull seasons. But though these things might sufficiently discover to such who were apprehensive of the guilt of sin, that *God* did not act according to his greatest severity, and thereby did give men encouragement to hearken out & enquire after the true way of being reconciled to *God*; yet all this amounts not to a firm foundation for faith as to the remission of sin, which doth suppose *God* himself publishing an act of grace and indemnity to the world, wherein he assures the pardon of sin to such as truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. Now is not this an inestimable advantage we enjoy by the *Scriptures*, that therein we understand what *God* himself hath discovered of his own nature and perfections, and of his readiness to pardon sin upon those gracious terms of Faith and Repentance, and that which necessarily follows from these two, hearty and sincere obedience?

2. The *Scriptures* give the most faithfull representation of the state and condition of the soul of man. The world was almost lost in *Disputes* concerning the nature, condition, and immortality of the soul before divine revelation was made known to mankind by the Gospel of *Christ*; but life and immortality

2 Cor. 5. 18,
19.

Rom. 10. 14.

Acts 14. 14.
Luk. 6. 35, 36.

Seet. 6.

talities was brought to light by the Gospel, and the future state of the soul of man, not discovered in an uncertain *Platonical* way, but with the greatest light and evidence from that God who hath the supreme disposal of souls, and therefore best knows and understands them. The *Scriptures* plainly and fully reveal a judgment to come, in which God will judge the secrets of all hearts, when every one must give an account of himself unto God, and God will call men to give an account of their stewardship here of all the receipts they have had from him, and the expences they have been at, and the improvements they have made of the talents he put into their hands. So that the Gospel of Christ is the fullest instrument of discovery of the certainty of the future state of the soul, and the conditions which abide it, upon its being dislodged from the body. But this is not all which the *Scripture* discovers as to the state of the soul; for it is not only a prospective-glass, reaching to its future state, but it is the most faithful looking-glass, to discover all the spots and deformities of the soul: And not only shews where they are, but whence they came, what their nature is, and whither they tend. The true Original of all that disorder and discomposure which is in the soul of man, is only fully and satisfactorily given us in the Word of God, as hath been already proved. The nature and working of this corruption in man, had never been so clearly manifested, had not the Law and Will of God been discovered to the world; that is the glass whereby we see the secret workings of those Bees in our hearts, the corruptions of our natures; that sets forth the folly of our imaginations, the unruliness of our passions, the distempers of our wills, and the abundant deceitfulness of our hearts. And it is hard for the most Elephantine sinner (one of the greatest magnitude) so to trouble these waters, as not therein to discover the greatness of his own deformities. But that which tends most to awaken the drowsie, senseless spirits of men, the *Scripture* doth most fully describe the tendency of corruption, that the wages of sin is death, and the issue of continuance in sin will be the everlasting misery of the soul, in a perpetual separation from the presence of God; and undergoing the lashes and severities of conscience to all eternity.

ty. What a great discovery is this of the *faithfulness* of God to the world, that he suffers not men to *undo* themselves without letting them know of it before-hand, that they might avoid it ! God seeks not to *entrap* mens souls, nor doth he rejoyce in the *misery* and *ruine* of his *creatures*, but fully declares to them what the *consequence* and *issue* of their sinfull practices will be, assures them of a *judgment* to come, declares his own future *severity* against contumacious sinners, that they might not think themselves *surprized*, and that if they had known there had been so great *danger* in *sin*, they would never have been such *fools* as for the sake of it to run into eternal misery. Now God to prevent this, with the greatest *plainness* and *faithfulness*, hath shewed men the *nature* and *danger* of all their sins, and asks them before-hand what they will do in the end thereof; whether they are able to bear his *wrath*, and *wrestle* with *everlasting burnings* ? if not, he bids them *bethink* themselves of what they have done already, and *repent* and *amend* their lives, lest *iniquity* prove their *ruine*, and *destruction* overtake them, and that without remedy. Now if men have cause to prize and value a faithful *Monitor*, one that tenders their good, and would prevent their ruine, we have cause exceedingly to prize and value the *Scriptures*, which give us the truest representation of the *state* and *condition* of our *souls*.

3. The Scripture discovers to us the only way of pleasing God and enjoying his favour. That clearly reveals the way (which man might have sought for to all eternity without particular revelation) whereby sins may be pardoned, and whatever we do may be *acceptable* unto God. It shews us that the ground of our acceptance with God, is through Christ, whom he hath made a *propitiation* for the *sins* of the world. and who alone is the *true* and *living* way, whereby we may draw near to God with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts *sprinkled* from an evil conscience. Through Christ we understand the *terms* on which God will shew favour and grace to the world, and by him we have ground of a *παρρησια* access with freedom and boldness unto God. On his account we may hope not only for grace to subdue

subdue our sins, resist temptations, conquer the devil and the world; but having fought this good fight and finished our course, by patient continuance in well doing, we may justly look for glory, honour, and immortality, and that crown of righteousness which is laid up for those who wait in faith, holiness, and humility for the appearance of Christ from heaven. Now what things can there be of greater moment and importance for men to know, or God to reveal, than the nature of God, and our selves, the state and condition of our souls, the only way to avoid eternal misery and enjoy everlasting Bliss!

The Scriptures discover not onely matters of importance, Sect. 7.
but of the greatest depth and mysteriousness, There are 2.
many wonderfull things in the Law of God, things we may admire, but are never able to comprehend. Such are the eternal purposes and decrees of God, the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the manner of the operation of the Spirit of God upon the souls of men, which are all things of great weight and moment for us to understand and believe that they are, and yet may be unsearchable to our reason, as to the particular manner of them. What certain ground our faith stands on as to these things, hath Book 2.ch.8.
been already shewed, and therefore I forbear insisting on sect. 5,6,7.
them.

The Scripture comprehends matters of the most univer- 3.
sal satisfaction to the minds of men; though many things do much exceed our apprehensions, yet others are most suitable to the dictates of our nature. As Origen bid Celsus see,
εἰ μὴ τὰ τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν τὰς κοινὰς ἐννοίας ἀρχὴν συναρπάζοντα, C. Cels. l. 3.
μεταπίθῃσι τὸ ἐργονοῦντος ἀκούσας τοῦ λεγούσαν, whether it was P. 135.
not the agreeableness of the principles of faith with the common notions of humane nature, which prevailed most upon all candid and ingenuous auditors of them. And therefore as Socrates said of Heraclitus his books, What he understood was excellent, and therefore he supposed that which he did not understand was so too: so ought we to say of the Scriptures, If those things which are within our capacity be so suitable to our natures and reasons, those cannot contradict our reason which yet are above them. There are many things which the minds of men were sufficiently assured that they

they were, yet were to seek for *satisfaction* concerning them, which they could never have had without *Divine revelation*. As the *nature of true happiness*, wherein it lay, and how to be obtained, which the *Philosophers* were so puzzled with, the *Scriptures* give us full *satisfaction* concerning it. True *contentment* under the *troubles* of life, which the *Scripture* only acquaints us with the true grounds of; and all the *prescriptions* of *Heathen Moralists* fall as much short of, as the *directions* of an *Empirick* do of a wise and skilfull *Physician*. *Avoiding the fears of death*, which can alone be through a grounded expectation of a future *state of happiness* which death leads men to, which cannot be had but through the right understanding of the *Word of God*. Thus we see the *excellency* of the *matters* themselves contained in this *revelation* of the *mind of God* to the world.

Sect. 8.

2.

As the *matters* themselves are of an *excellent nature*, so is the manner wherein they are *revealed* in the *Scriptures*; and that,

1. *In a clear and perspicuous manner*; not but there may be still some passages which are hard to be understood, as being either *prophetical* or consisting of *ambiguous phrases*, or containing *matters* above our *comprehension*; but all those things which concern the *terms* of mans *salvation*, are delivered with the greatest evidence and perspicuity. Who cannot understand what these things mean, *What doth the Lord require of thee, but to doe justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* that without *faith* it is impossible to please God; that without *holiness* none shall see the Lord; that unless we be born again, we can never enter into the Kingdom of heaven; these and such like things are so plain and clear, that it is nothing but mens shutting their eyes against the *light* can keep them from understanding them; God intended these things as *directions* to men; and is not he able to speak intelligibly when he please? he that made the tongue, shall he not speak so as to be understood without an *infallible interpreter*? especially when it is his design to make known to men the *terms* of their *eternal happiness*. Will God judge men at the great day for not believing those things which they could not understand? *Strange*, that
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ever men should judge the *Scriptures* obscure in matters necessary, when the *Scripture* accounts it so great a judgement for men not to understand them. If our Gospel be hid, it is ^{2 Cor. 4.3,4.} hid to them that are lost; In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them. Sure Lot's door was visible enough, if it were a judgement for the men of Sodom not to see it; and the *Scriptures* then are plain and intelligible enough, if it be so great a judgement not to understand them.

2. In a powerfull and authoritative manner; as the things contained in *Scripture* do not so much beg acceptance as command it; in that the expressions wherein our duty is concerned, are such as awe mens consciences and pierce to ^{Heb. 4.12,13.} their hearts and to their secret thoughts; All things are open and naked before this Word of God; every secret of the mind and thought of the heart lies open to its stroke and force; it is quick and powerfull, sharper then a two-edged sword, piercing to the diving asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The word is a Telescope to discover the great Luminaries of the world, the truths of highest concernment to the souls of men, and it is such a Microscope as discovers to us the smallest Atom of our thoughts, and discerns the most secret intent of the heart. And as far as this light reacheth, it comes with power and authority as it comes armed with the Majesty of that God who reveals it, whose authority extends over the soul and conscience of man in its most secret and hidden recesses.

3. In a pure and unmixed manner; in all other writings how good soever, we have a great mixture of dross and gold together; here is nothing but pure gold, Diamonds without flaws, Suns without spots. The most current coins of the world have their alloyes of baser metals, there is no such mixture in divine Truths; as they all come from the same Author, so they all have the same purity. There is a Urim and Thummim upon the whole *Scripture*, light and perfection in every part of it. In the Philosophers we may meet, it may be, with some scattered fragments of purer metal, amidst

abundance of *droß* and *impure oare* ; here we have whole *wedges of gold*, the same *vein of purity* and *holiness* running through the whole book of *Scriptures*. Hence it is called the *form of sound words* ; here have been no *hucksters* to corrupt and mix their own *inventions* with *Divine Truths*.

2 Tim. I. 13.

Sect. 9.

4. In an uniform and agreeable manner. This I grant is not sufficient of it self to prove the *Scriptures* to be *Divine*, because all men do not contradict themselves in their *writings*, but yet here are some peculiar *circumstances* to be considered in the agreeableness of the *parts* of *Scripture* to each other which are not to be found in meer *humane writings*.

1. That this doctrine was delivered by persons who lived in different ages and times from each other. Usually one age corrects another's faults, and we are apt to pity the ignorance of our predecessors, when it may be our posterity may think us as ignorant, as we do them. But in the sacred *Scripture* we read not one age condemning another ; we find light still increasing in the series of times in *Scripture*, but no reflections in any time upon the ignorance, or weakness of the precedent ; the dimmest light was sufficient for its age, and was a step to further discovery. *Quintilian* gives it as the reason of the great uncertainty of *Grammar* rules, *quia non analogia dimissa cælo formam loquendi dedit* ; that which he wanted as to *Grammer*, we have as to *Divine Truths* ; they are delivered from *heaven*, and therefore are always uniform and agreeable to each other.

Quintil. l. 1.
c. 6.

2. By persons of different interests in the world. God made choice of men of all ranks to be *enditers* of his *oracles*, to make it appear it was no matter of *State policy* or particular interest which was contained in his word, which persons of such different interests, could not have agreed in as they do. We have *Moses*, *David*, *Solomon*, persons of royal rank and quality ; and can it be any mean thing, which these think it their glory to be penners of ? We have *Isaiah*, *Daniel* and other persons of the highest education and accomplishments, and can it be any trivial thing which these imploy themselves in ? We have *Amos*, and other *Prophets* in the old *Testament*, and the *Apostles* in the *New*, of the meaner sort of men.

men in the world, yet all these joyn in *confort* together; when *God* tunes their *spirits*, all agree in the same *strain* of *divine truths*, and give *light* and *harmony* to each other.

3. By persons in different places and conditions; some in prosperity in their own countrey, some under banishment and adversity, yet all agreeing in the same substance of doctrine; of which no alteration we see was made either for the flattery of those in power, or for avoiding miseries and calamities. And under all the different dispensations before, under, and after the Law, though the management of things was different, yet the doctrine and design was for substance the same in all. All the different dispensations agree in the same common principles of religion; the same ground of acceptance with God, and obligation to duty was common to all, though the peculiar instances wherein God was served might be different according to the ages of growth in the Church of God. So that this great uniformity considered in these circumstances, is an argument that these things came originally from the same Spirit, though conveyed through different instruments to the knowledge of the world.

5. In a persuasive and convincing manner: and that these ways. 1. Bringing divine truths down to our capacity, clothing spiritual matter in familiar expressions and similitudes, that so they might have the easier admission into our minds. 2. Propounding things as our interest, which are our duty: thence God so frequently in Scripture, recommends our duties to us under all those motives which are wont to have the greatest force on the minds of men; and annexeth gracious promises to our performance of them; and those of the most weighty and concerning things. Of grace, favour, protection, deliverance, audience of prayers, and eternal happiness, and if these will not prevail with men, what motives will? 3. Courting us to obedience, when he might not only command us to obey but punish presently for disobedience. Hence are all those most pathetic and affectionate strains we read in Scripture. O that there were such a heart within them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it might go well with them, and with their children after them!

Deut. 5. 29.

them ! Wo unto thee O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean ? when shall it once be ? Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel ? How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? how shall I deliver thee Israel ? how shall I make thee as Admah ? how shall I set thee as Zeboim ? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ? What Majesty and yet what sweetness and condescension is there in these expressions ? What obstinacy and rebellion is it in men for them to stand out against God, when he thus comes down from his throne of Majesty and wooes rebellious sinners to return unto him that they may be pardoned ? Such a matchless and unparalleled strain of Rhetorick is there in the Scripture, far above the art and insinuations of the most admired Orators. Thus we see the peculiar excellency of the manner wherein the matters contained in Scripture are revealed to us : thus we have considered the excellency of the Scripture, as it is a discovery of Gods mind to the world.

Señ. 10. The Scriptures may be considered as a rule of life, or as a Law of God which is given for the Government of the lives of men, and therein the excellency of it lies in the nature of the duties, and the encouragements to the practice of them.

2.

1. In the nature of the duties required, which are most becoming God to require, most reasonable for us to perform.

1. Most becoming God to require, as they are most suitable and agreeable to the Divine nature, the imitation of which in our actions is the substance of our Religion. Imitation of him in his goodness and holiness, by our constant endeavours of mortifying sin and growing in grace and piety. In his grace and mercy by our kindness to all men, forgiving the injuries men do unto us, doing good unto our greatest enemies. In his justice and equity, by doing as we would be done by, and keeping a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. The first takes in the duties of the first, the other the duties.

duties of the second Table. All acts of piety towards God, are a part of Justice; for as Tully saith, *Quid aliud est pietas nisi iustitia adversus Deos?* and so our loving God with our whole hearts, our entire and sincere obedience to his will, is a part of natural justice; for thereby we do but render unto God that which is his due from us as we are his creatures. We see then the whole duty of man, the fearing God and keeping his Commandments, is as necessary a part of Justice, as the rendering to every man his own is.

2. They are most reasonable for us to perform, in that
1. Religion is not only a service of the reasonable faculties which are employed the most in it, the commands of the Scripture reaching the heart most, and the service required being a spiritual service, not lying in meats and drinks, or any outward observations, but in a sanctified temper of heart and mind, which discovers it self in the course of a Christians life: but 2. The service it self of Religion is reasonable; the commands of the Gospel are such, as no mans reason which considers them, can doubt of the excellency of them. All natural worship is founded from the dictates of nature, all instituted worship on Gods revealed will; and it is one of the prime dictates of nature, that God must be universally obeyed. Besides, God requires nothing but what is apparently mans interest to do; God prohibits nothing but what will destroy him if he doth it; so that the commands of the Scriptures are very just and reasonable.

2. The encouragements are more than proportionable to the difficulty of obedience. Gods commands are in themselves easie, and most suitable to our natures. What more rational for a creature than to obey his Maker? All the difficulty of Religion ariseth from the corruption of nature. Now God to encourage men to conquer the difficulties arising thence, hath propounded the strongest motives, and most prevailing arguments to obedience. Such are the considerations of Gods love and goodness manifested to the world by sending his Son into it to die for sinners, and to give them an example which they are to follow, and by his readiness through him to pardon the sins, and accept the persons of such who so re-

ceive him as to walk in him; and by his promises of grace to assist them in the wrestling with the enemies of their salvation. And to all these add that glorious and unconceivable reward which God hath promised to all those who sincerely obey him; and by these things we see how much the encouragements over-weigh the difficulties, and that none can make the least pretence that there is not motive sufficient to down-weigh the troubles which attend the exercise of obedience to the will of God. So that we see what a peculiar excellency there is in the Scriptures as a rule of life, above all the precepts of meer Moralists, the foundation of obedience being laid deeper in mans obligation to serve his Maker, the practice of obedience being carried higher in those most holy precepts which are in Scripture, the reward of obedience being incomparably greater than what men are able to conceive, much less to promise or bestow.

Sett. II.

3.

The excellency of the Scriptures appears as they contain in them a Covenant of Grace, or the transactions between God and Man in order to his eternal happiness. The more memorable any transactions are, the more valuable are any authentick records of them. The Scriptures contain in them the Magna Charta of Heaven, an Act of pardon with the Royal assent of Heaven, a Proclamation of good-will from God towards men; and can we then set too great a value on that which contains all the remarkable passages between God and the souls of men, in order to their felicity, from the beginning of the world? Can we think, since there is a God in the world of infinite goodness, that he should suffer all mankind to perish inevitably without his propounding any means for escaping of eternal misery? Is God so good to men as to this present life; and can we think, if mans soul be immortal, as we have proved it is, that he should wholly neglect any offer of good to men as to their eternal welfare? Or is it possible to imagine that man should be happy in another world without Gods promising it, and prescribing conditions in order to it? If so, then this happiness is no free gift of God, unless he hath the bestowing and promising of it? and man is no rational agent, unless a reward suppose condi-

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ons to be performed in order to the obtaining it ; or man may be bound to *conditions* which were never required of him ; or if they must be required, then there must be a *revelation* of *Gods will*, whereby he doth require them : And ifso, then there are some *Records extant* of the transactions between *God and man*, in order to his *eternal happiness* : For what reason can we have to imagine that such *Records*, if once *extant*, should not continue still, especially since the same *goodness of God* is engaged to preserve such *Records*, which at first did cause them to be indicted ? Supposing then such *Records extant* somewhere in the world of these grand transactions between *God and mens souls*, our business is brought to a *period* ; for what other *Records* are there in the world that can in the least *vie* with the *Scriptures*, as to the giving so just an *account* of all the *transactions* between *God and men* from the *foundation* of the world ? Which gives us all the *steps*, *methods* and *ways* whereby *God* hath made known his *mind* and *will* to the world, in order to mans *eternal Salvation*. It remains only then that we *adore* and *magnifie* the *goodness* of *God* in making known his *Will* to us, and that we set a *value* and *esteem* on the *Scriptures*, as on the only *authentick Instruments* of that *Grand Charter of Peace*, which *God* hath revealed in order to mans *Eternal Happiness*.

F I N I S.

A Catalogue of some Books Printed for *Henry Mortlock* at the *Phœnix* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*.

A Rational account of the Grounds of Protestant Religion, being a Vindication of the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury's Relation of a Conference, &c. from the pretended answer of T. C. wherein the true grounds of Faith are cleared, and the false discovered ; the Church of England Vindicated from the Imputation of Schism, and the most Important particular Controversies between us and those of the Church of Rome, thoroughly examined, by *Edw. Stillingfleet, D. D. Folio.*

Sermons

Sermons preached upon several occasions, with a Discourse annexed concerning the True Reason of the Sufferings of Christ, wherein Crellius his Answer to Grotius is Considered, by Edw. Stillingfleet, D. D. Folio.

Irenicum: A Weapon Salve for the Churches Wounds, by Edw. Stillingfleet, D. D. Quarto.

A Discourse concerning the Idolatry Practised in the Church of Rome, and the hazard of Salvation in the communion of it, in Answer to some Papers of a Revolted Protestant, with a particular Account of the Fanaticism and Divisions of that Church, by Edw. Stillingfleet, D. D. Octavo.

An Answer to several Late Treatises occasioned by a Book entituled a Discourse concerning the Idolatry practised in the Church of Rome, and the hazard of Salvation in the Communion of it, by Edw. Stillingfleet, D. D. the first part, Octavo.

A second Discourse in vindication of the Protestant Grounds of Faith, against the pretence of Infallibility in the Rom. Church, in Answer to the Guide in Controversies, by R. H. Protestancy without Principles, and Reason and Religion, or the certain Rule of Faith, by E. W. with a particular enquiry into the Miracles of the Roman Church, by Edw. Stillingfleet, D. D. Octavo.

A Defence of the Discourse concerning the Idolatry practised in the Church of Rome, in Answer to a Book entituled Catholicks no Idolaters, by Edw. Stillingfleet, D. D. Dean of S. Paul's, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

Several Conferences between a Romish Priest, a Fanatick Chaplain, and a Divine of the Church of England, concerning the Idolatry of the Church of Rome, being a full Answer to the late Dialogues of T. G.

The Rule of Faith, or an Answer to the Treatise of Mr. J. S. entituled Sure footing, &c. by John Tillotson, D. D. Preacher to the Honourable Society of Lincolns-Inn: to which is adjoynd A Reply to Mr. J. S. his third Appendix, &c. by Edw. Stillingfleet, D. D. Dean of S. Paul's, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

The Antiquities of Nottinghamshire extracted out of Records, Original Evidences, Leiger-books, with other Manuscripts and authentick Authorities, beautified with Maps, Prospects and Portraitsures, by Robert Thoroton, Dr. of Physick, Folio.

